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HC raps M'rashtra over student's arrest

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Sensex snaps 2-day rally, drops by 624.82 points

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Cameron Norrie beats Medvedev in epic 5-setter

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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PSU workers to lose all retirement benefits on being fired

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The Central Government has amended the Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 2021, introducing provisions that allow for the forfeiture of retirement benefits of employees absorbed into Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) if dismissed or removed for misconduct.

The recently notified Central Civil Services (Pension) Amendment Rules, 2025, state that dismissal or removal from service of a PSU employee, after absorption, for any subsequent misconduct, will result in the forfeiture of retirement benefits — including those earned during their previous government service.

However, such a decision will be subject to review by the administrative ministry concerned with the PSU, providing a level of oversight on disciplinary actions taken by these undertakings.

Previously, the rules did not permit the forfeiture of government service-related retirement benefits in such circumstances. The change marks a significant tightening of disciplinary consequences for absorbed employees.

- Previously, the rules did not permit the forfeiture of government service-related retirement benefits in such circumstances. The change marks a significant tightening of disciplinary consequences for absorbed employees.

Additionally, the new rules clarify that provisions relating to the continuation of pension or family pension subject to future good conduct, and the grant of compassionate allowance, will also apply to those dismissed or retrenched.

These amended rules are applicable to central government servants appointed on or before 31 December 2003, excluding railway personnel, casual or daily-rated employees, and officers of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS), and Indian Forest Service (IFoS).

The amendment introduces stricter consequences for misconduct among PSU employees, while also ensuring a mechanism for ministerial review to prevent arbitrary forfeiture of pension rights. *—PTI*

IT Dept extends due date to file ITR till 15 September

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The Income Tax Department has extended the deadline for filing Income Tax Returns (ITRs) for Assessment Year 2025-26 to 15 September, from the earlier date of 31 July. This extension applies to individuals and entities not required to have their accounts audited. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) explained that significant changes to the ITR forms and the time needed to update and roll out the new filing systems prompted the delay. The aim is to provide taxpayers with a smoother and more convenient filing experience. Taxpayers are advised to use the additional time to ensure their returns are accurate and complete before submitting them by the new deadline. *—PTI*

Above-normal monsoon rainfall likely in June: IMD

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

India is expected to receive above-average rainfall this monsoon season, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). June is likely to see 108 per cent of the long-period average (LPA) rainfall, while the entire monsoon season could bring 106 per cent of the usual 87 cm. The monsoon core zone, including parts of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Odisha, and surrounding areas, is forecast to receive above-normal rainfall, vital for agriculture. Northwest India is expected to get normal rainfall, whereas the Northeast may experience below-normal levels. Central and south peninsular India is also likely to see above-average rainfall, said IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra. The forecast suggests a generally favourable monsoon. *—PTI*

5 dead, 6 missing in China chemical unit blast

BEIJING, 27 MAY 2025

Five people were killed and six others reported missing following a massive explosion at a major chemical plant in China's Shandong province on Tuesday. The blast occurred around noon at the state-owned Shandong Youdao Chemical facility in Gaomi city, one of the world's largest producers of the pesticide chlorpyrifos. Nineteen others sustained minor injuries, according to state media reports quoting the local emergency management bureau. The explosion created a huge fireball and mushroom cloud, with images on Chinese social media showing smoke billowing hundreds of feet into the air. The cause of the explosion is still under investigation. The plant, established in 2019, employs over 300 workers and produces approximately 11,000 tonnes of pesticide annually. *—PTI*

India will respond to Pak's terrorism war strategy: PM

He says Pak turned to proxy warfare after defeat by India

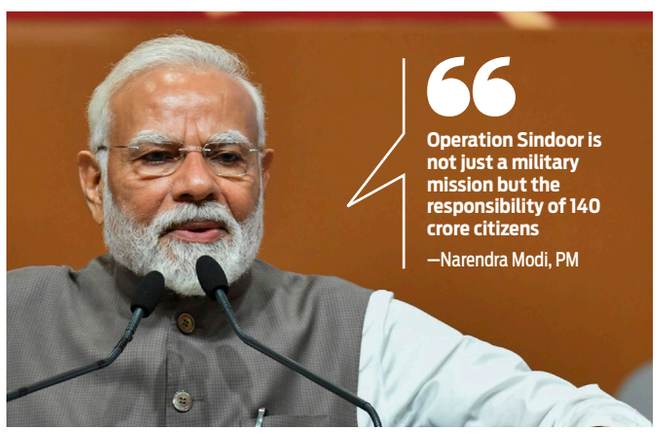
GANDHINAGAR, 27 MAY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday declared that terrorism is not a proxy war but a "deliberate war strategy" adopted by Pakistan, and India will respond appropriately. Addressing a Gujarat government event, Modi dismissed distinctions between state and non-state actors in Pakistan, asserting the country is waging war by supporting terrorism.

He cited the state honours given to terrorists killed after 6 May during Operation Sindoor, with Pakistani flags draped over their coffins and military salutes offered, as proof of Pakistan's direct involvement. "If they are engaging in war, the response will be accordingly," he said.

Referring to the 1947 Kashmir incursion, Modi criticised the failure to eliminate Mujahideens then, and lamented that Sardar Patel's advice to reclaim Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir was ignored, in a veiled criticism of then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

Modi said Pakistan turned to proxy warfare after being defeated in direct conflicts with India. "Despite playing diplomatic games, Pakistan has faced India's military might. They cannot win in direct war," he added.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses addresses public in Gandhinagar, Gujarat on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

He also highlighted India's suspension of the Indus Water Treaty as a response to the Pahalgam terror attack, warning that Pakistan is already feeling its effects.

Modi criticised decades of neglect in managing India's water infrastructure and called for rightful access to water resources.

On the economy, Modi noted India's rise from the 11th to 4th largest global economy since 2014, despite major challenges.

He urged citizens to support Operation Sindoor as a people's movement by rejecting imported goods and promoting Made in India products.

"Operation Sindoor is not just a military mission but the responsibility of 140 crore citizens," he said, urging focus on tier-2 and tier-3 cities for India's future economic growth. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

SC seeks Centre's response on plea against Waqf Act

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

- Centre defended the law, asserting Waqf is a secular concept and enjoys a presumption of constitutionality.

The Supreme Court on Tuesday issued notices to the Centre and others on a plea challenging the constitutional validity of certain provisions of the Waqf Act. The bench, comprising Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih, tagged the matter with other pending petitions on similar issues.

Advocate Ashwini Upadhyay, representing petitioner Nikhil Upadhyay, argued that the plea also challenges the 2013 amendments to the Waqf Act. He cited the apex court's 17 April 2025 order on challenges to the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, noting that such petitions are to be listed separately.

"Why should a challenge to the 1995 Act be allowed in 2025?" the CJI questioned, raising concerns over delay. The counsel replied that the petition includes challenges to subsequent amendments.

The plea contends that Parliament cannot enact laws favouring waqf properties to the detriment of non-Muslims and alleges undue favouritism.

On 22 May, the Court reserved interim orders on three issues concerning the 2025 Act: de-notification of waqf properties, composition of waqf boards and council, and treatment of waqf property when a collector identifies it as government land. The Centre defended the law, asserting Waqf is a secular concept and enjoys a presumption of constitutionality. *—PTI*

Youth killed in sword attack near M'luru

MANGALURU, 27 MAY

A 42-year-old man, Imtiyaz, was hacked to death in broad daylight on Monday near Ira Kodi in Bantwal taluk, Dakshina Kannada. He was a pick-up driver and secretary of a local mosque, as well as an active member of the South Canara Sunni Federation. His associate Kalander was seriously injured in the attack.

According to police, the incident occurred while Imtiyaz was unloading sand from his vehicle. Two bike-borne assailants attacked him and fled. A similar incident was reported on Tuesday, when Abdul Rahiman, also a pick-up driver, was murdered in Kolattamajalu. He died on the spot, while another man with him was hospitalised.

This is the third killing in the region in just a month. On 27 April, Kerala native Mohammed Ashraf was lynched during a cricket match, and on 1 May, rowdy-sheeter and Hindutva activist Suhas Shetty was murdered in Bajpe. The killings have heightened communal tensions in the district. In response to the volatile situation, prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarika Suraksha Sanhite, 2023, have been imposed in Bantwal, Belthangady, Puttur, Kadaba, and Sullia from 6pm on 27 May to 6pm on 30 May. *—PTI*

BMRCL bins toilet fee for metro stns

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

Following public outrage and protests, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has withdrawn its decision to impose charges for using public toilets at 12 Namma Metro stations. It has also cancelled its contract with Sulabh International, the non-profit previously managing these facilities.

The now-scrapped fee structure— 2 for urinals and 5 for toilets—applied only to restrooms outside the paid areas of select metro stations, while toilets within the ticketed zones remained free. *—Salar News*

BJP expels MLAs Somashekar, Hebbar for 'anti-party activities'

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

The BJP on Tuesday expelled two of its MLAs in Karnataka, ST Somashekar and A Shivaram Hebbar, for six years for their alleged "anti-party activities," party's state president BY Vijayendra said.

The party high command took a decision after long deliberations.

Deputy Chief Minister and state Congress chief DK Shivakumar criticized this action.

Somashekar and Hebbar represented Yashwanthpur and Yellapur assembly constituencies respectively and were previously with Congress.

In 2019, they were among the 18 Congress and JDS MLAs who brought down the Congress-JDS coalition government headed by HD Kumaraswamy and helped BJP, making BS Yediyurappa chief minister.

ST Somashekar and A Shivaram Hebbar **PHOTO: X**

The duo had won the 2023 Assembly election on the BJP, but often ignored party's diktat, instructions and had stopped attending the party meetings.

In the Karnataka Assembly they supported the ruling Congress.

Reacting sharply to their expulsion from BJP, Shivakumar said, "Somashekar and Hebbar have not raped anyone inside the Vidhana Soudha."

Shivakumar said there are so many FIRs and investigations underway against some legislators. "They were given long rope to rectify themselves but they ignored all the warnings. Finally they have been expelled from the party," Vijayendra said. According to Vijayendra, their activities were often discussed in the party's state core committee meetings and the Central leadership was also apprised about them. *—PTI*

EMBASSY URGES CAUTION

Skip classes, lose visa: Indians in US warned

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The US Embassy in India on Tuesday warned international students studying in the US that if they "drop out, skip classes, or leave your programme of study" without informing the school, their student visas may be revoked.

The Embassy, in a post on X, also urged students to adhere to the terms of visas and "maintain your student status" to avoid any issues.

American universities attract a large number of Indian students.

In 2023, the US consular team in India issued over 1,40,000 student visas.

The same year, the US Mission in India processed a record 1.4 million visas.

The F-1 Visa (Academic Student) allows individuals to enter US as a full-time student at an accredited college, university, academic high school or other academic institution.

American universities attract a large number of Indians **PHOTO: PTI**

The J visas are non-immigrant visas for individuals approved to participate in exchange visitor programmes in the US. The Ministry of External Affairs earlier said that Indian missions in the US were in touch with Indian students facing issues relating to the revocation of visas and extending possible support to them. Meanwhile, the Trump administration reportedly terminated Harvard University's Student and Exchange Visitor Programme, raising concerns over the legal status of 10,158 international students, including 788 from India, currently enrolled at the varsity for the 2024-25 academic year.

However, as per international reports, a federal judge has blocked the Trump administration's decision to revoke the university's ability to enroll international students.

Trump to cut $100M in contracts for Harvard

The Trump administration asked federal agencies to cancel contracts with Harvard University worth about $100 million. The government cancelled over $2.6 billion in federal research grants for the Ivy League school for opposing its demands for changes to the school's leadership. *—PTI*

SAUDI TO CELEBRATE EID-UL-ADHA ON 6 JUNE, INDIA LIKELY ON 7 JUNE

RIYADH/NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The crescent moon of Dhu al-Hijjah was sighted in Tamir, Saudi Arabia, confirming that Eid Al Adha will be observed on 6 June. Accordingly, the holy month of Dhu al-Hijjah begins on Wednesday, 28 May, and Hajj will commence on 4 June. The Day of Arafah will be observed on Thursday, 5 June.

The Saudi Supreme Court announced the sighting after confirmation from multiple regions across the Kingdom.

India is likely to celebrate Eid Ul Adha (also known as Bakrid or Eid uz Zuha) on Saturday, 7 June, subject to local moon sighting.

Eid Al Adha, the second most important Islamic festival, is celebrated globally on the 10th of Dhu al-Hijjah. It commemorates the sacrifices of Prophet Ibrahim, his wife Hajar, and son Prophet Ismail. The festival coincides with the annual Haj pilgrimage, a mandatory religious duty for all able Muslims. *—Agencies*

Cottonpet murder suspects identified; cops on trail

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

Bengaluru police have identified two suspects in the Cottonpet murder case and have sent teams to their native place to apprehend them. Authorities have not disclosed the suspects' names or location. Latha, 50, wife of cloth merchant Prakash, was found dead at her residence on Monday afternoon. The assailants allegedly fled with 150g of gold, Rs 2 lakh in cash, and a mobile phone—but curiously left behind the gold chain and earrings she was wearing. Investigators believe the killers were known to the family and had prior knowledge of valuables kept for the daughter's upcoming wedding. The murder occurred while Latha was alone at home. Her husband was at his shop, daughter at work, and son at school. Police suspect the attackers used the main door to enter and exit. Latha's body was discovered by Prakash when he returned home for lunch. —*Salar News*

In viral video, youth abuses police in public

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

The Suddaguntepalya police have initiated a manhunt for a young man who allegedly hurled vulgar insults at officers during a confrontation at a local bakery on Tavarekere Main Road in City. The incident unfolded last week in Krishnamurthy Layout when the youth, approximately 20 years old, demanded a cigarette without payment. Upon the shopkeeper's refusal, he erupted in anger, shattering several glass bottles. As customers attempted to subdue him, the bakery owner warned of police involvement, which prompted the youth to unleash a torrent of foul language in Kannada directed at the police. Unbeknownst to him, his entire outburst was recorded on the shopkeeper's mobile phone. The video was subsequently submitted to police, resulting in an FIR being filed. Authorities are now reviewing CCTV footage. —*Salar News*

With 97.83%, girl tops BBMP colleges in Commerce stream

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

Fiza Fathima, daughter of carpenter Chand Pasha and homemaker Nusrath Fathima, has topped the commerce stream in the 2nd PUC exams across Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) colleges with a score of 582/600 (97.83 per cent). The results were announced on 8 April. A student of BBMP PU College for Girls, Robertson Road, Frazer Town, she is the first rank holder of her college and scored a perfect 100 in both Business Studies and Computer Science. Fiza dedicated 13 hours a day to her studies—5.5 hours in college and 7.5 hours at home. Despite her hard work, she faced a setback during her Business Studies examination where she mistakenly wrote the answers incorrectly and was not allowed an additional answer sheet. "I cried a lot because I had worked so hard," she told **Salar News**. However, she was later appeared for the improvement exam, and seized the opportunity, scoring a perfect 100. "My parents were overjoyed when they heard about my score. They couldn't stop smiling. My dad gave me a big hug and congratulated me. Their pride made all my efforts worthwhile," she said. Fiza now dreams of pursuing BCA, gaining IT experience, and eventually becoming a teacher. —*Salar News*

COVID STRAIN MILD, BUT CAUTION MUST, SAYS CM

CM says masks not must for now; orders vaccine procurement

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

With fresh Covid-19 cases being reported in the state, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday said that even though the virus strain that is prevalent is not "serious" in nature, precautionary measures need to be taken.

He said, officials have been instructed to take all necessary measures and to be fully prepared to deal with any situation in the future.

The Chief Minister on Monday held a meeting with the Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao, Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil, health officials and experts to review the Covid situation. He also gathered information from the principal secretary of the health department and the head of the Covid task force.

"I have asked for certain precautionary measures be taken. We should be prepared for everything. There should be no problem for oxygen, ventilators, testing kits and wards. Their availability must be ensured," Siddaramaiah said, adding that the state has 80 active cases as of Tuesday.

"We have asked parents not to send children with a cold, cough and fever to schools. It is important for elderly people, those with comorbidities,

Bengalureans don masks amid Covid fears **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

- Asked about screening or keeping watch on those travelling from abroad, Siddaramaiah said, there has been no communication from the central government for taking such a measure, but instructions have been given to take all precautions

to wear masks. You (media persons) also wear masks," he said.

To a question, were there any discussions regarding making wearing of masks compulsory for all and administering vaccinations, the CM said, "I have asked officials to procure vaccines if available."

Wearing masks is not compulsory for everyone as of now, but those who have kidney and heart diseases should wear masks, he said.

Asked about screening or keeping watch on those travelling from abroad, Siddaramaiah said, there has been no communication from the central government for taking such a measure, but instructions have been given to take all precautions. —*PTI*

NAIDU EYES PIECE OF PIE

Won't allow HAL shift to Andhra, says Shivakumar

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday said the state government would not allow the shifting of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) production units out of Bengaluru. He was reacting to Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's proposal to relocate HAL's advanced production facilities to his state.

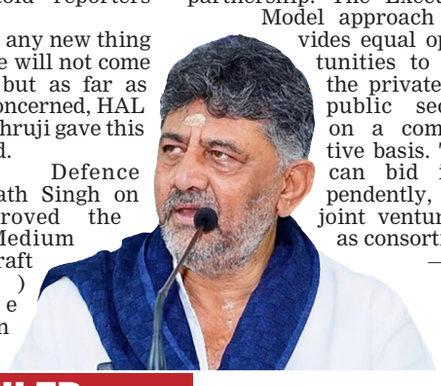
"I don't want to comment on whatever they demand. I want Parliament members and Central ministers to react to this, but as the government, we will not allow anything to be shifted. We will give land if they want to expand," Shivakumar told reporters here.

"They can get any new thing if they want, we will not come in their way, but as far as Karnataka is concerned, HAL is our pride, Nehruji gave this to us," he added.

Meanwhile, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday approved the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) Programme Execution Model, a key step to boost India's indigenous defence capabilities and strengthen the domestic aerospace industry, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) said in an official statement.

According to the MoD's statement, in a significant push towards enhancing India's indigenous defence capabilities and fostering a robust domestic aerospace industrial ecosystem, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) Programme Execution Model.

The Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) is set to execute the programme through industry partnership. The Execution Model approach provides equal opportunities to both the private and public sectors on a competitive basis. They can bid independently, as a joint venture or as consortia. —*ANI*



Towing policy to return in new form, hints Parameshwara

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

The controversial vehicle towing policy, suspended in 2022, may soon be reintroduced in the city in a revised form, said Home Minister G Parameshwara on Tuesday.

The minister said discussions are underway to restart vehicle towing in the city to tackle worsening traffic congestion and rampant illegal parking. He said a meeting with senior officials was convened to explore a more regulated approach.

"We won't use private towing contractors this time. Department vehicles will be used, and clear instructions have been given to officials," he said.

Parameshwara was responding to the growing concern over Bengaluru's traffic chaos, as well as the tragic death of a child in Mandya during a police checking. He criticised the officers involved in that case, calling their actions "inhuman".

He said public welfare will guide the decision. "If towing helps people, we'll consider it. If it becomes a nuisance, we won't go ahead," he said.

The previous towing policy was scrapped in February 2022 by the Bommai government after public backlash and reports of misuse. Viral videos showed vehicles being lifted despite being legally parked and towing staff were accused of harassment. Earlier this year, the Bengaluru Traffic Police hinted at resuming towing in high-violation zones. —*Salar News*

FIR FILED

Creating enmity: CM slams BJP MLC for 'Pak' remark on DC

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and DCM DK Shivakumar pay floral tribute to late Jawharlal Nehru on his death anniversary at KPCC office in Bengaluru on Tuesday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday strongly condemned BJP MLC N Ravi Kumar for his "Pakistani" remarks against Kalaburagi Deputy Commissioner (DC) Fauzia Tarannum, describing it as an attempt to "create enmity" in society.

The CM's statement comes in response to an FIR filed against Kumar, the chief whip of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, after his comments sparked outrage.

"Whatever BJP MLC Ravi Kumar said is not appropriate. This is a statement to create enmity. Nothing will happen to her (Tarannum), but it is to create enmity in society...I strongly condemn it," Siddaramaiah stated.

Addressing a rally organised under the BJP's "Kalaburagi Chalo" campaign, Ravi Kumar had said, "The Kalaburagi DC office has lost its independence. The DC madam is also listening to what they (Congress) say. I don't know whether the DC has come from Pakistan or is an IAS officer here."

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday said the State government will take action against Ravi Kumar. He said that many IAS officers had met him on this issue, and they were all enraged by the BJP MLC's comments. —*ANI*

Jamaat slams Ravi Kumar for targeting officer

The Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Karnataka, on Tuesday strongly condemned what it called "defamatory and communal" remarks by BJP MLC N Ravikumar against Kalaburagi Deputy Commissioner Dr Fauzia Tarannum, describing his comments as a direct attack on constitutional values and an accomplished woman officer.

Tashkeela Khanum, State secretary of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, said on Tuesday, "Targeting a dedicated IAS officer –honoured with a Presidential award – with baseless and humiliating remarks is disgraceful. This kind of behaviour reflects a deep-rooted prejudice and a dangerous trend of communal polarisation." —*Salar News*

Adikesavulu's grandson 'assaulted' at gym

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

High Grounds police have registered an FIR after Geetha Vishnu, the grandson of prominent politician and industrialist DK Adikesavulu, alleged that he was attacked at a luxury hotel gym over a trivial issue.

According to the complaint, the incident occurred around 8pm on 19 May inside the gym at Shangri-La Hotel. Vishnu was reportedly changing clothes after a workout when a drop of his sweat allegedly splashed on another gym user, identified as Syed Sadiq.

The incident sparked a heated argument, during which Sadiq allegedly abused Vishnu and punched him near the eye. He also reportedly threatened to kill him if seen again in the gym or elsewhere.

Police have booked Sadiq based on Vishnu's complaint and are investigating the case. Vishnu said the assault was premeditated. He said that two weeks earlier, he had an altercation with Congress Youth Wing President HS Manjunath in the hotel's sauna. Sadiq was reportedly among the group present then. He termed the attack a misuse of political power rather than a personal dispute.

The police said that the investigation is on, and notices have been sent to those involved in the incident. Further details will emerge following a detailed investigation, they said. —*Salar News*

BBMP CHIEF TO OFFICIALS: SPEED UP SC SURVEY

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Chief Commissioner, M Maheshwar Rao, has instructed officials to enhance the deployment of enumerators in areas with significant populations of Scheduled Caste (SC) communities, particularly in the East Zone, to expedite the ongoing comprehensive survey.

During a review meeting on Tuesday, Rao assessed the progress of the SC/ST community survey and emphasised the need for quicker completion. He encouraged officials to collaborate with local community leaders and allocate additional staff to SC-populated areas.

As of 12.30pm on 27 May, the BBMP has engaged 8,215 enumerators across all eight zones, having visited 131,730 SC households and identified 511,594 individual members from these communities. Moreover, enumerators have gathered data from over 2.8 million non-SC households. The BBMP aims to finalise the survey promptly to facilitate future welfare planning and targeted initiatives. —*PTI*

ISRO JOB FRAUD: HC ORDERS FIR AGAINST COMPLAINANT

BENGALURU, 27 MAY

The Karnataka High Court directed the City police on Tuesday to open an investigation into a man who claims he was defrauded of over Rs 1 crore by a woman and her alleged accomplices under the guise of securing him employment at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The decision arose during a bail hearing for the accused, Vinutha ME.

The vacation bench, led by Justice Suraj Govindaraj, noted the "unusual nature" of the financial transactions involved, prompting the court to instruct the police to register a complaint against the complainant himself. The court outlined that the complainant, Sanjay N, alleged that he paid Rs 1.03 crore to Vinutha and others to obtain a graphic designer position at ISRO, yet claimed no job offer materialised.

According to Sanjay, in August 2024, Vinutha visited his home, convinced him of her connections, and collected Rs 37 lakh initially, later demanding an additional Rs 23 lakh in cash. The court is set to send a copy of its order to the ISRO Chairman, ensuring communication proof is submitted by the next hearing scheduled for 4 June. —*PTI*

BRIDGE INUNDATED

Flooding halts road transport to Goa

BELAGAVI, 27 MAY

Road transport between Karnataka and Goa via Belagavi on state highway has been halted since Monday afternoon after heavy downpour in Khamapur taluk in Belagavi district and Sahyadri Ghat region triggered floods that drowned a bridge and also washed away a temporarily constructed mud road.

Instead of using the highway, people can travel to Goa via Khamapur taluk. However, only two-wheelers can pass through the construction site of a bridge across the Malaprabha river in Kosanolli village.

A temporary mud road was constructed across the river when it was dry, but it was washed away in the recent rains, blocking the Belagavi-Jamboti-Chorla road.

Monsoon Rain Exposes Potholes and Delays on Mumbai—Goa Highway **PHOTO: MMR**

Khanapur receives the highest rainfall in the state after Aagbe disconnecting road links between many villages situated near the forest area.

National Highway Authority of India's project manager in Belagavi, Bhuvaneshwar Kumar, said as water receded slightly on the under-construction bridge, only to two-wheelers are allowed to pass through. —*Salar News*

Kumble to be state forest and wildlife ambassador

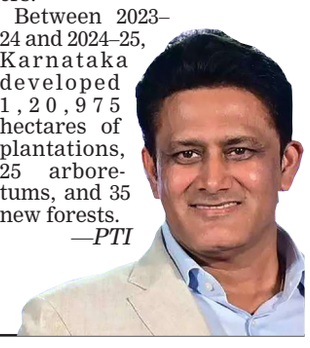
BENGALURU, 27 MAY

Former cricketer Anil Kumble will be appointed as Karnataka's forest and wildlife ambassador, Forest Minister Eshwar B Khandre announced on Tuesday. Kumble, who previously served as Vice-President of the Karnataka Wildlife Board, has accepted the role without remuneration.

"Kumble is globally respected and deeply committed to forest and wildlife conservation. His involvement will boost public awareness around forest development, tree preservation, and wildlife protection," said Khandre.

Marking two years in office, the minister outlined key environmental achievements. The state held 8,848 vanamahotsavas (tree-planting festivals), planting 8.5 crore saplings across forest zones, roadsides, and government land. Additionally, 3.7 crore saplings were distributed to farmers.

Between 2023–24 and 2024–25, Karnataka developed 1,20,975 hectares of plantations, 25 arboretums, and 35 new forests. —*PTI*



HC fumes as soldiers march through drain

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The Delhi High Court has taken judicial notice of a news report highlighting that over 3,000 soldiers of the Rajputana Rifles must wade through a foul-smelling, filthy drain in Delhi Cantonment to reach their parade ground. Terming the situation "unacceptable", the bench of Justices Prathiba M Singh and Manmeet PS Arora noted the culvert is often flooded, slick with sludge, and at times waist-deep. Despite repeated requests, a bridge has not been built. The Court, already hearing pleas on drainage issues across Delhi, issued notice to the Delhi Cantonment Board and directed it to file a status report by 29 May. The matter has been listed for further hearing on the same date. *—PTI*

Anti-terror operation launched in J&K's Kathua

JAMMU, 27 MAY

Security forces launched coordinated search operations across Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday following reports of suspected terrorist movement. In Kathua district, the Army, CRPF, and police began a joint operation in the upper reaches of Lowang and Sarthal in the Bani area. Meanwhile, the J&K Police's Special Operations Group conducted a search in the Manohar Gopala and Shatala camp areas of Samba as part of an area domination exercise, which concluded peacefully. In Kishtwar's Singhpora forest, operations entered the sixth day following a 22 May encounter in which a soldier was killed. The terrorists escaped using dense foliage and challenging terrain. Efforts to track and neutralise them continue amid heightened security in the region. *—PTI*

Delhi HC defers hearing in Patkar's defamation case

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday deferred further arguments in social activist Medha Patkar's plea challenging her conviction in a 2001 defamation case filed by Delhi LG VK Saxena. Justice Shalinder Kaur listed the matter for 14 and 15 July. Patkar has also contested a trial court order denying her permission to call an additional witness. On 25 April, she was arrested following a non-bailable warrant for non-compliance. However, the High Court granted her interim bail on a personal bond of Rs 25,000. Previously, the appellate court modified her sentence to probation for one year with Rs 1 lakh compensation. Advocates Sanjay Parikh and Abhimanyu Shreshth appeared for Patkar, while Gajinder Kumar represented Saxena. Proceedings continue in both petitions. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Errol Musk to visit Ayodhya's Ram temple: Sources

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Errol Musk, billionaire Elon Musk father, who has joined the global advisory board of homegrown Servotech, will visit the Ram temple in Ayodhya during his India tour in June. Musk, who will arrive in Delhi on 1 June, will meet policymakers, investors, business leaders and senior bureaucrats at a company event on 2 June. His trip also includes a visit to Servotech's solar and EV charger manufacturing unit in Safiabad in Haryana. Musk will also visit Ram Janmabhoomi Ayodhya Ram Mandir to seek blessings from Shree Ram Lalla. On World Environment Day Servotech will organize a plantation drive as part of Musk's visit to emphasize sustainability and a greener environment. *—PTI*

India approves Rs 15K cr 5th-gen stealth fighter jets

This is amid reports of China sending jets to Pakistan

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The IAF, at present, does not have a fifth-generation fighter jet PHOTO: X

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has cleared the "execution model" to design and produce India's ambitious fifth-generation stealth fighter jet -- the advanced medium combat aircraft (AMCA).

India has been working on the ambitious AMCA project to develop the medium weight deep penetration fighter jet with advanced stealth features to bolster its air power capability.

AMCA along with the Tejas light combat aircraft are planned to be the mainstays of the Indian Air Force.

The defence ministry on Tuesday said Singh has approved the "execution model" for AMCA that will be developed by Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) in cooperation with industry partners. The approval for the model the critical step for development of the aircraft came against the backdrop of increasing focus on bolstering India's air power in view of China's rapid stride in the domain.

The "execution model" approach provides equal opportunities to both private and public sectors on competitive basis, it said.

"This is an important step towards harnessing the indigenous expertise, capability and capacity to develop the AMCA prototype, which will be a major milestone towards Aatmanirbharta (self-reliance) in the aerospace sector," it said.

The cabinet committee on security led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had given in-principle approval to fighter jet programme last year.

The initial development cost of the project has been estimated at around Rs 15,000 crore. India's confidence in the development of the AMCA saw a significant jump after the development of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas.

Manufactured by state-run aerospace behemoth Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, Tejas aircraft is a potent platform for air combat and offensive air support missions while reconnaissance and anti-ship operations are its secondary roles.

The IAF, at present, does not have a fifth-generation fighter jet.

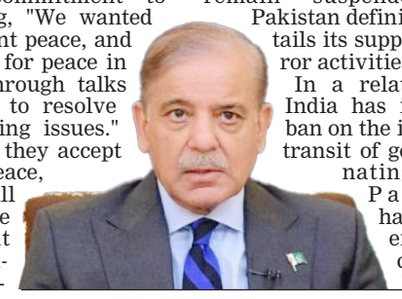
China already has Chengdu J-20 jets that it claimed to be a fifth-generation air superiority fighter with precision strike capability. China is allgedly fast-tracking its plan to deliver stealth fighter jets to Pakistan. *– PTI*

'A DURABLE CEASEFIRE'

In Iran, Pak PM says ready for talks with India

TEHRAN, 27 MAY

Pakistan's Prime Minister **Shehbaz Sharif** has expressed a willingness to engage in dialogue with India to address longstanding issues, including Kashmir, water-sharing, and trade. Speaking at a joint press conference with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian during his visit to Tehran, Sharif stated, "We are ready to talk for the sake of peace on water issues with our neighbour," and further underscored the need to promote trade and counter-terrorism through discussions.



Sharif emphasized Pakistan's commitment to peace, stating, "We wanted peace, we want peace, and we will work for peace in the region through talks on the table to resolve our outstanding issues." He added, "If they accept my offer of peace, then we will show that we really want peace, seriously and sincerely."

Following his visit to Iran, Sharif is set to travel to Tajikistan and Azerbaijan. Pezeshkian echoed Iran's support for a durable ceasefire between India and Pakistan and called for dialogue among regional countries to foster peace.

Tensions over water-sharing have risen, particularly after the Indus Water Treaty was put on hold following a terrorist attack in Pahalgam. Indian authorities have since linked the treaty's status to Pakistan's actions regarding cross-border terrorism. India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar reiterated that the treaty will remain suspended until Pakistan definitively curtails its support for terror activities.

In a related move, India has imposed a ban on the import and transit of goods originating from Pakistan, halting bilateral trade completely. *– PTI*

3 LAUNCH PADS DESTROYED

BSF targeted 76 Pak posts, 42 FDLs during Op Sindoor

JAMMU, 27 MAY

The Border Security Force (BSF) has reported significant success in Operation Sindoor, targeting 76 Pakistani border outposts and 42 forward defence locations (FDLs). This operation was a direct response to unprovoked firing from Pakistani Rangers along the International Border (IB) in the Jammu sector, which aimed to cover an infiltration attempt by 40 to 50 terrorists.

BSF Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Chiterpaul Singh said, the Indian forces retaliated vigorously, with reports confirming the destruction of key terror launch pads operated by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence near Sunderbani.

BSF Inspector General (IG) Shashank Anand indicated that intelligence inputs suggested multiple launch pads were neutralised, resulting in several fatalities among terrorists and Pakistani Rangers. Specific targets included a Lashkar-e-Taiba launch pad near "chicken neck" area, destroyed in night of 9-10 May.

Following an 22 April attack heightened military presence was established in sensitive areas like Rajouri and Poonch. DIG Indreshwar highlighted that a preemptive strike was launched following intelligence reports of terrorist movements, further intensifying BSF's strategic response.

The IG confirmed that Pakistan employed low-flying drones in the recent conflict, which resulted in casualties for Indian forces. In retaliation, the BSF countered by targeting Pakistani bunkers and communication equipment.

It marked by bravery of the BSF personnel, especially women, has reaffirmed India's commitment to securing its borders while ensuring coordination among various security agencies. *– PTI*

Not intimidated by cowardly acts of terror: Omar

PAHALGAM, 27 MAY

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said that his government was not "intimidated by cowardly acts of terror," with the cabinet holding its meeting after a month of the Pahalgam terror strikes.

Abdullah said on X, "..... a clear message -- we are not intimidated by cowardly acts of terror..... Jammu & Kashmir stands firm, strong, and unafraid." He thanked the people of Pahalgam for raising their voice against bloodshed.

The meeting addressed these concerns and reinforced the government's commitment to combating terrorism and reviving tourism.

Earlier he had assured stakeholders of the government's full support and pledged to consider their suggestions for reviving tourism.

He emphasised the need for a comprehensive tourism revival plan to be developed jointly with the Tourism Department after the conclusion of this year's Shri Amarnath ji Yatra.

Abdullah also expressed concern for small-scale entrepreneurs, who took loans to invest in tourist facilities. *– PTI*

India advocates zero tolerance on terrorism

GLOBAL, 27 MAY

An all-party Indian delegation has been actively engaging with international leaders across various countries to assert India's zero-tolerance policy towards terrorism, particularly in light of the recent Pahalgam terrorist attack that resulted in 26 fatalities.

In Qatar, the delegation led by Supriya Sule highlighted the need to eliminate distinctions between terrorists and their state backers, receiving strong condemnation from the Qatari leadership for the attack. Qatar's stance reinforced its commitment to combat terrorism globally.

Simultaneously, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, another delegation headed by Shiv Sena MP Shrikant Eknath Shinde sought support against terrorism, underscoring collaboration in addressing cross-border terrorism.

In Singapore, Senior Minister Sim Ann affirmed Singapore's alignment with India's efforts against terrorism, while in France, BJP MP Ravi Shankar Prasad stated that the distinction between the Pakistani state and terrorism has denigrated, highlighting Pakistan's use of terrorism as a state policy.

The comprehensive series of engagements aims to strengthen bilateral ties and garner international support against terrorism, ensuring India's assertive stance is prevalent in global discussions. The delegation will continue its tour with upcoming visits to South Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt, and other nations to further amplify India's position on terrorism. *– PTI*

A multi-party delegation led by BJP MP Ravi Shankar Prasad during a press conference, in Paris, on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

'Not found suitable' is the new Manuvaad: RaGa

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Congress leader **Rahul Gandhi** on Tuesday alleged that eligible candidates from SC, ST, and OBC communities were being deliberately declared 'not found suitable' to keep them away from education and leadership.

"Not Found Suitable' is the new Manuvaad now.....they are kept away from education and leadership," the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said in his post on X, while sharing a video of his interaction with members of the Delhi University Students Union.

Gandhi quoted BR Ambedkar while hailing education as the biggest weapon for equality. He accused the BJP government and the RSS of subverting this power.

Gandhi said that over 60 per cent of the reserved posts of professor and over 30 per cent of those of associate professor were kept vacant by using the 'not found suitable' mechanism.

He said getting reservation was a matter of fighting for rights, respect, and participation.

On 22 May the Delhi University objected to Gandhi's unannounced visit to its North Campus, calling it a breach of institutional protocol and a disruption of student governance operations. *– PTI*

Tribunal extends ban on ULFA for 5 more years

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), banned for 35 years, has about 200-250 cadres based in Myanmar, reportedly holding around 200 weapons, the government told a judicial tribunal. On 21 May, Justice Michael Zothankhuma of Gauhati High Court confirmed a five-year extension of the ban on ULFA and its factions, effective from 27 November, 2024. Government highlighted ULFA's demand for a sovereign Assam through armed struggle and its continued violent activities, including attacks on security forces and disruptive acts on national days. *– PTI*

SC proposes transfer of 21 HC judges

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The Supreme Court collegium has recommended transfers or repatriation of 21 judges of several high courts across the country.

The collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India BR Gavai, decided to recommend the transfers or repatriation of these high court judges at its meeting held on Monday.

It said the collegium has recommended that Telangana High Court judge Sujoy Paul be transferred to Calcutta High Court. The collegium has said Justice V Kameswar Rao, presently a judge of Karnataka High Court, be repatriated to Delhi High Court. It has recommended repatriation of Punjab and Haryana High Court judge Sanjeev Prakash Sharma to Rajasthan High Court. The statement said the collegium has recommended transfer of Kerala High Court judge Dinesh Kumar Singh to the Karnataka High Court.

It has been recommended that Justice Shree Chandrashekhar of the Rajasthan High Court be transferred to the Bombay High Court. It has said Justice Jayant Banerji of the Allahabad High Court be transferred to Karnataka High Court. It has recommended the repatriation of Karnataka High Court judge C Sumalatha to the Telangana High Court.

The collegium has also recommended that Karnataka High Court judge Lalitha Kanneganti be transferred to Telangana High Court. *– PTI*

FREE SPEECH CURTAILED?

'Foreign funded NGOs cannot publish news'

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The new rules will have to be abided by the NGOs seeking registration under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act PHOTO: ANI

The Centre has asserted that the NGOs engaged in publication-related activities and receiving foreign contribution, will not be able to publish any newsletter and must get a certificate from the Registrar of the Newspaper for India that it does not circulate any news content.

The new rules will have to be abided by the NGOs seeking registration under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, it said.

In a notification, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said it has amended the rules made under the FCRA and henceforth, NGOs which are seeking permission to get foreign funding must give an undertaking that it will adhere to the Good Practice Guidelines of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the global watchdog for terror financing and money laundering.

- The MHA said such bodies or NGOs, which are seeking registration must enclose financial statements and audit reports of the last three financial years, including the statement of assets and liabilities, receipts and payments account, and income and expenditure account.

The MHA said such bodies or NGOs, which are seeking registration must enclose financial statements and audit reports of the last three financial years, including the statement of assets and liabilities, receipts and payments account, and income and expenditure account.

If the audit reports and financial statements do not contain activity-wise expenditure for the last three financial years, a chartered accountant's certificate specifying the activity-wise amount spent by the association, duly reconciled with the income and expenditure account and the receipt and payment account must be submitted.

The MHA said if the publication of the association is registered with the Registrar of Newspaper for India, a "Not a Newspaper" certificate from the Registrar of the Newspaper for India must be submitted.

If the NGO was previously registered under the FCRA, it will be required to submit an affidavit regarding receipt and utilisation of foreign contribution after expiry or cancellation of registration certificate. *—PTI*

High prices: Andhra cracks down on theatres

VIJAYAWADA, 27 MAY

Andhra Pradesh's Deputy Chief Minister **Pawan Kalyan** has instructed officials to implement systematic management of theatres and regulate food, beverage, and ticket prices across the state. In addressing the film industry, Kalyan emphasised that producers should seek ticket price increases through the Telugu Film Chamber (TFC) collectively, rather than on an individual basis, including for his upcoming film, 'Hari Hara Veera Mallu', set for release on 12 June.

Kalyan raised concerns regarding excessive pricing on snacks and drinks, urging officials to closely monitor pricing and quality standards, initiating investigations where necessary. He stated that monopolistic practices in both multiplexes and single-screen theatres have been noted, prompting a call for detailed inquiries and corrective actions.

Highlighting the importance of affordability, Kalyan remarked that high refreshment prices should not deter families from visiting cinemas, suggesting that lower prices could boost audience numbers and subsequently increase tax revenues.

Furthermore, he called for an investigation into alleged political interference in theatre closures, asserting that no individual should evade accountability. *– PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Malyalam actor charged with assaulting staffer

KOCHI, 27 MAY

Noted Malayalam actor Unni Mukundan has been charged with allegedly assaulting his professional manager, Vipin Kumar, in Kochi, police confirmed on Tuesday. Kumar claims that Mukundan slapped him for recording a film review featuring another actor. The incident reportedly occurred in the basement parking area of an apartment complex in Kakkanad on 26 May. Kumar further alleged that Mukundan used abusive language and threatened him. The actor has been booked under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, including charges for voluntarily causing hurt, wrongful restraint, and criminal intimidation. An FIR has been lodged, and an investigation is ongoing. Mukundan has yet to respond to the allegations—*PTI*

2 people killed in Chhattisgarh mine wall collapse

KORBA, 27 MAY

Tragedy struck in Chhattisgarh's Korba district as two individuals were killed and another injured when part of a coal mine wall collapsed early Tuesday. The incident occurred at South Eastern Coalfields Limited's Gevra open-cast mine. Preliminary investigations suggest the trio had entered the site to steal coal when the boundary wall collapsed. The deceased have been identified as Vishal Yadav, 18, and Dhan Singh Kanwar, 24, who were trapped under debris. The injured Sahil Dhanwar has been taken to the district hospital. Rescue operations commenced promptly, and officials indicated that the trio may have evaded security measures. SECL management has urged the public to refrain from illegal and dangerous activities in mining areas. —*PTI*

Woman held for trespass into actor Aditya's house

MUMBAI, 27 MAY

A 48-year-old woman has been arrested for allegedly trespassing into actor Aditya Roy Kapur's house in the western suburb of Khar here. Gazala Siddique, who resides in UAE, arrived in Mumbai on 26 May and reached the actor's apartment building on Shirli Rajan Road. She reportedly entered the building after giving the security guards some excuses. Siddique sat in the actor's front room, even as Roy Kapur's staff tried to find out if she had been invited. When the actor denied having any knowledge about her, the staff contacted the police. Siddique informed the police that she wanted to meet the actor. The police registered a case and arrested the woman for trespassing.—*PTI*

Bihar locomotive to be exported to West Africa

PATNA, 27 MAY

Wabtec and Indian Railways unveiled their first freight locomotive manufactured in Bihar, set for export to West Africa next month. This initiative comes from the Marhowra manufacturing unit, established in 2015 to enhance Indian manufacturing capabilities. The unveiling was attended by Wabtec officials and representatives from the West African nation. Since its inception, the Marhowra facility has delivered over 700 locomotives to the Railways. The export order includes over 100 locomotives tailored for specific conditions in West Africa. The first two units are currently undergoing safety checks, with plans to ship them from Mundra Port by June 2025. This export aligns with the launch of a major iron ore mining project in the region, increasing the need for efficient freight capacity.—*PTI*

HC raps M'rashtra over student's arrest

Apex court calls govt, college reactions to social media post on India–Pak row 'radical'

MUMBAI, 27 MAY

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday came down heavily on the Maharashtra government for arresting a 19-year-old student from Pune for her social media post on Indo-Pak hostilities, calling its reaction "radical".

A vacation bench of Justices Gauri Godse and Somasekhar Sundaresan asked the teen's lawyer to immediately file a bail plea, which would be granted on Tuesday.

Terming it "radical", the bench said the state government action was unwarranted and turned a student into a criminal.

The Pune student was arrested earlier this month for her social media post on Indo-Pak hostilities amid Operation Sindoor.

The girl, presently in judicial custody, moved the high court challenging a decision by her college to rusticate her.

The bench said the state government action was unwarranted and turned a student into a criminal PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

The court questioned the conduct of the government and the college.

Additional government pleader PP Kakade said the girl's post was against the national interest.

The court said national interest would not suffer because of a post uploaded by a student, who realising her mistake, apologised.

The bench said that an educational institution's approach should be to reform, not punish. The girl should have been given an opportunity to explain.

The bench noted that the girl had suffered enough and asked her advocate, to immediately file a petition seeking bail. The girl would be released immediately to allow her to take her exams.

The second-year student of Information Technology contended that the rustication order passed by the Sinhgad Academy of Engineering was "arbitrary and unlawful".

The petitioner had reposted her post without ill intent and immediately apologised.

On 7 May, the girl reposted a post on Instagram from an account called 'Reformistan', criticizing the Indian government for provoking a war against Pakistan. —*PTI*

SC declines plea against Mumbai jetty order

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The Supreme Court on Tuesday declined to hear a plea challenging the Bombay High Court's refusal to halt construction of a passenger jetty and terminal near the Gateway of India. The bench, led by Chief Justice BR Gavai, noted the high court was already handling the matter, with a hearing scheduled for 16 June.

The Chief Justice highlighted the project's benefits, comparing it to the coastal road, which has significantly reduced travel time in Mumbai. He questioned if the authorities had obtained all necessary permissions. Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati confirmed seven clearances had been secured.

Petitioners argued the project lacked public consultation and favoured only a select few, claims Bhati denied, stating the facility is for daily commuters. The bench acknowledged the challenge of local opposition to public projects but stressed the matter should be resolved by the high court.

The government assured the historic wall near the Gateway of India would remain untouched until further hearings. —*PTI*

Fishermen cover damaged roof of their house with a plastic sheet as a precautionary measure at Poonthura in Thiruvananthapuram on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

Heavy rains disrupt normal life across four states

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM/ BHUBANESWAR/ RAJOURI/JAMMU/ MAHARASHTRA, 27 MAY

Heavy rains affected normal life in Kerala on Tuesday, with trains running late, low-lying areas inundated and traffic snarls created in towns and villages.

Uprooted trees on railway tracks has caused concern in northern districts.

Flooding was reported in Wayanad, with people being shifted to relief camps.

Houses were destroyed and crops damaged in Ernakulam's high ranges.

Mudslides and floods were reported from Kannur.

The disruption of power supply triggered people's protests in many places.

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department sounded an orange alert, predicting heavy rainfall in Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Alappuzha, Kottayam, Idukki, Ernakulam, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasaragod on Tuesday.

Odisa

In view of a low-pressure area forming in the Bay of Bengal, the Odisha government asked all district collectors to remain prepared for heavy rainfall.

Thunderstorms with lightning were forecast in 15 districts on Tuesday.

Fishermen were advised against venturing into the deep sea from 29 May to 1 June.

Jammu and Kashmir

Over 100 sheep and goats of nomadic families were killed after being struck by lightning, accompanied by heavy thunder and hail storm, in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district on May 25 and 26.

Maharashtra

Mumbai on Tuesday recorded an average rainfall of 106 mm in 24 hours.

Public transport services operated with minor delays.

Moderate to heavy rainfall was forecast for the city over the next 24 hours.

Thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds are expected at isolated places, it was stated.

Waterlogging and power supply disruption led to the suspension of suburban train services.

A high tide of 4.88 metres expected at 12.13 pm on Tuesday and another of 4.18 metres at 11.56 pm. —*PTI*

LENS ON KHALISTANI LINK

Blast kills suspected terrorist in Amritsar

CHANDIGARH, 27 MAY

A suspected Khalistani terrorist died in a blast while retrieving explosive material from a vacant area on the Majitha road bypass in Punjab's Amritsar on Tuesday, police said.

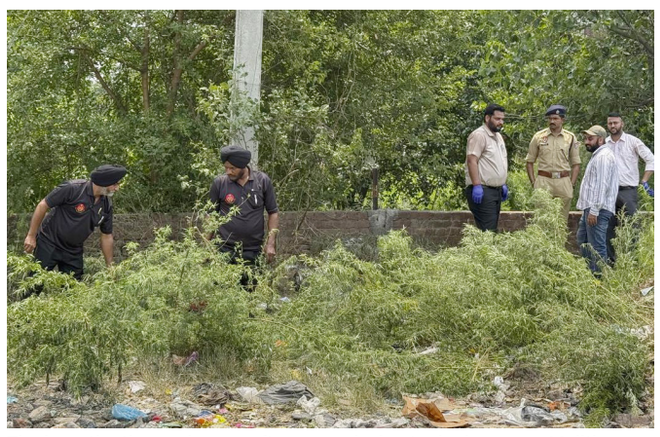
The intensity of the explosion, which took place around 9.30am, was such that both arms of the man were blown off.

Deputy Inspector General (Border Range) Satinder Singh said the man is suspected to have links with some terror organisation like Babbar Khalsa International (BKI). The man came here to retrieve the explosive material and thereafter, he said.

"The explosive material was in his hands when the blast took place," Singh said, adding, "We are investigating his identity and the terror organisation he belonged to."

"As per circumstantial evidence, it is clear that this man was a member of some terrorist organisation," Singh said, adding police got some vital clues from the man's pocket which indicated his links with some terror outfit.

A team of Forensic Science Laboratory is investigating to find out whether it was an IED (improvised explosive device) blast or grenade blast. —*PTI*



The investigation underway after an explosion took place near Majitha Road in Amritsar on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

Forces gun down Maoist in Jharkhand

MEDININGAR, 27 MAY

A commander of the banned CPI (Maoist) was killed in a gunfight with security forces in Jharkhand's Palamu district, a senior police official said on Tuesday. Another red rebel, who is carrying a bounty of Rs 15 lakh, is said to have been injured in the encounter. Several weapons were recovered during the search operation, the officer said.

The encounter between security forces and Maoists broke out near the Sitachuan area between Mohammadganj and Hydernagar police station limits late on Monday, police said.

Meanwhile, 18 Naxalites, among them 10 carrying a cumulative bounty of Rs 38 lakh, surrendered before security forces in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district on Tuesday, police said. The cadres turned themselves in, citing disappointment with "hollow" and "inhuman" Maoist ideology and atrocities by ultras on local tribals, Sukma Superintendent of Police Kiran Chavan said.

In another development, a Maoist carrying a reward of Rs 4 lakh on his head surrendered before the police in Bhubaneswar on Tuesday. Bijaya Punem, a native of Bijapur district in Chhattisgarh, was an active member of the BGN (Bansadhara-Ghumsur-Nagabali) division of the Maoist group, a statement said. —*PTI*

NO OIL SPILL IN KERALA COAST FROM SUNKEN LIBERIAN SHIP

KOCHI, 27 MAY

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) on Tuesday said no oil has made its way to the Kerala shores from the Liberian cargo ship that sank off the state's coast on 25 May.

A defence PRO said on X that efforts were currently underway by the ICG to deal with the oil spill caused by the shipwreck.

There were concerns that the oil spill might reach the Kerala shores as the fuel was drifting at a speed of around three kilometres per hour.

The ICG deployed offshore patrol vessels for monitoring the site, intensifying surveillance and spill mitigation efforts.

A Liberian container vessel MSC Elsa 3 is holding marine fuel after sinking 38 nautical miles off the Kerala coast on Saturday afternoon PHOTO: PIB

Liberian container vessel – MSC ELSA 3 – sank 15 nautical miles off the Kochi coast due to flooding. —*PTI*

10 Indians honoured in Nepal for Everest ascent

KATHMANDU, 27 MAY

In a ceremony held on Tuesday, ten Indian climbers were among over 100 mountaineers honoured in Nepal to commemorate the historic ascent of Mount Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay. The event precedes the International Everest Day, celebrated annually on 29 May.

Badri Pandey, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation, presented certificates of appreciation to both Nepalese and international climbers. "The Nepal government is committed to promoting mountain tourism while ensuring the safety of climbers and the preservation of the Himalayas for future generations," he remarked. He stressed the importance of caring for and protecting the mountains. —*PTI*

Tourism Minister Badri Pandey presented certificates of appreciation to both Nepalese and international climbers PHOTO: PTI

MISINFORMATION GALORE

Social media impacts menstrual health: Survey

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

While a majority of Indian women consider social media a good source of information on menstruation, very few rely on it during menstrual emergencies, the everteen Menstrual Hygiene Survey.

72.4 per cent of respondents were in the 19–35 age group and 76.6 per cent had completed graduation or higher education.

While 71.6 per cent of women believe that social media offers adequate information about menstruation, only 11.5 per cent rely on it as their primary source during menstrual emergencies.

Several women reported encountering misleading or harmful information online.

One false claim was that delayed periods indicate Polycystic Ovarian Disease.

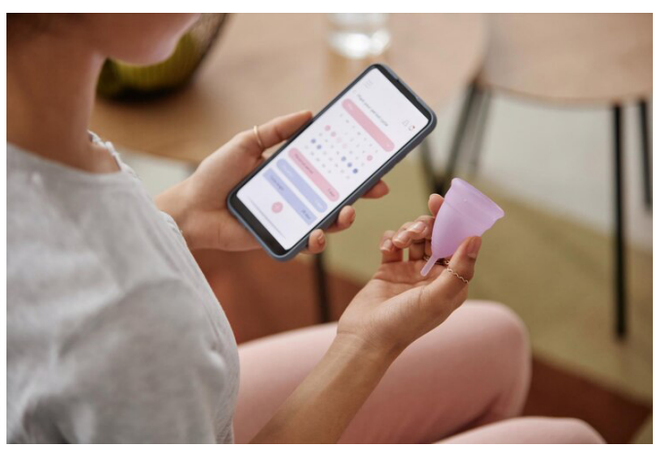


PHOTO: FREEPIK

Another was to consume lemonade or coffee for period pain, which worsened their symptoms.

Some respondents came across inaccurate home remedies, while others saw misinformation suggesting exercise during periods could harm the body.

Hariom Tyagi, CEO of Wet and Dry Personal Care, the makers of everteen said the survey highlights a significant awareness gap.

41.5 per cent of women reported not using any form of pain relief during menstruation, despite 82.7 per cent experiencing mild to severe pain.

Only 5.5 per cent were aware of the benefits of menstrual cramp roll-ons as an alternative to painkillers, which are used by 14.2 per cent of respondents.

There was prevalence of social media content reinforcing menstrual taboos and myths.

5.7 per cent of respondents used disposable period panties, while 4.7 per cent and 1.6 per cent use menstrual cups and tampons respectively. 87.8 per cent used sanitary pads.

The survey covered altogether 1,152 women from across India. —*PTI*

HARYANA FAMILY WITH ₹20 CRORE DEBT FOUND DEAD INSIDE CAR

CHANDIGARH, 27 MAY

In a heart-wrenching incident, six members of a family, including three children, were discovered dead in a car in Panchkula, Haryana, with one more succumbing en route to hospital, amid suspicions of a suicide pact.

The car, registered in Dehradun, was found parked on a roadside in Sector 27 late last night by passerby Puneet Rana. He noticed a towel hanging from the car door and, upon investigation, found the six deceased, along with one man, Praveen Mittal, 41, who was struggling to breathe. Mittal later reportedly told Rana that his family had committed suicide, disclosing financial troubles before collapsing.

Authorities confirmed that preliminary findings suggest poisoning as the cause of death. Panchkula's Deputy Commissioner of Police, Himadree Kaushik, stated that investigations are ongoing, including reviewing social media and bank records.

Relatives revealed that Mittal was Rs 15 to Rs 20 crore in debt and struggled to support his family by driving a taxi. Notably, he had moved several times in pursuit of stability, yet faced mounting pressures. —*Agencies*

HONOURING SANTA TERESA

People carry the remains of Saint Teresa of in a silver casket before her burial in Albade Tormes, Salamanca, in northwestern Span, on Monday. She was a Spanish saint, mystic and 16th century religious reformer who became a central figure of a spiritual and monastic renewal movement which reformed the Carmelite orders of both women and men ***PHOTO: PTI***

India has zero tolerance towards Pak's terrorism

Indian officials have said the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) Islamist militant group was behind the attack ***PHOTO: PTI***

New Delhi has sent delegations to dozens of countries to bolster international support for a "zero tolerance" policy on terrorism that India says originates in Pakistan.

India last week sent parliamentary delegations to 33 countries on a diplomatic mission to drum up support for countering Pakistan-based militant groups Delhi has said are behind recent cross-border attacks.

Tensions between India and Pakistan remain high following the killing of Hindu tourists in India-administered Kashmir on 22 April. The attack resulted in the death of 26 people, causing outrage in India.

Indian officials have said the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) Islamist militant group was behind the attack. On 7 May, the military launched strikes, dubbed Operation Sindoor, targeting what New Delhi said was terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-administered Kashmir.

Pakistan responded with its own strikes, and four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes followed, until both sides agreed to a ceasefire on 10 May.

In the wake of the attack and the resulting hostilities, both India and Pakistan have tried to shape the narrative on the conflict.

The Indian delegations, which included several political parties, were equipped with country-specific dossiers detailing Pakistan's alleged history of fostering terrorism, India's "zero-tolerance" policy on terror and evidence linking the April attack to Pakistan-based groups.

"This is a political mission. We want to make a strong outreach to the world, to convey our resolve to fight terrorism," said Randhir Jaiswal, official spokesperson of India's Ministry of External Affairs.

"We want to exhort the world to hold those responsible for cross-border terrorism accountable, those who have been practicing this for 40 years against India — that is Pakistan — their actions need to be called out," added Jaiswal.

Pakistan's government has strongly denied providing support for militant groups and maintains it had nothing to do with the April attack.

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has called India's strikes "unprovoked" and an "act of aggression." Its Defense Ministry has said the Indian strikes hit civilian locations, and denied that India had targeted terrorist camps.

Islamabad, too, has carried out its own diplomatic outreach, led by Pakistan People's Party chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

This delegation, although involving fewer delegates than those of India, is similarly aimed at engaging key international stakeholders, including members of the UN Security Council.

The aim is to present Pakistan's case for its own security, focusing on issues such as alleged ceasefire violations by India, threats by India to cut off the Indus River's water supply and Pakistan's position on the Kashmir dispute. On Sunday, Sharif visited Pakistani ally Turkey as part of a five-day diplomatic tour.

Policy experts and diplomats who spoke with DW said India's diplomatic offensive is a key element in its effort to present the strikes on Pakistan as a legitimate act of self-defense under international law.

Wadhwa added that the delegations "will counter the false narrative of Pakistan" rejecting involvement in the Kashmir attack.

India's global outreach was also highlighted by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's recent visits to the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany.

In a meeting with German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul last week, Jaishankar reiterated New Delhi's stance on fighting terrorism."India has zero tolerance for terrorism. India will never give in to nuclear blackmail. India will deal with Pakistan purely bilaterally. There should be no confusion in any quarter," Jaishankar told a joint press conference.

India has a precedent of sending parliamentary delegations abroad to build diplomatic support and articulate its foreign policy positions, especially during or after major crises involving Pakistan. For example, after the attack on the Indian parliament in December 2001, the government of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee sent multi-party delegations to brief world leaders about the alleged role of Pakistan-based militant groups in carrying out the attack.

However, the current delegation stands out for its scope and scale compared to previous instances.

"It is happening in a geopolitical landscape where India is a major G20 economy, a Quad member and a key player in global forums. The Pakistani mission is not a match in terms of the scale and the breadth," said Wadhwa. Ajay Bisaria, a former high commissioner of India to Pakistan, told DW that India's narrative "will resonate more globally with partners and multilateral organizations." Bisaria said India's delegations also represent a strong national consensus and give India the opportunity to build international support in what should be a renewed global war against terrorism. "It is crucial for India to bolster its global diplomacy, leveraging innovative approaches like parliamentary delegations to counter the Pakistan army's forced narrative and showcase India's measured responses to security challenges," he added. *—DW news*

SALAR ساڈا

'Global warming is a likely cause of cancer in women'

Global warming could be making cancer in women more common and deadly, according to a study conducted in the Middle East and North Africa.

The region is predicted to reach three to four degrees Celsius of warming about three decades earlier than the rest of the world.

Summers in Middle Eastern nations, such as the United Arab Emirates, are characterised by extremely high temperatures - sometimes touching 50 degrees Celsius -- while North Africa sees temperatures in the range of 40-50 degrees Celsius.

Analysing prevalence and deaths due to cancer with temperatures between 1998 and 2019, researchers, including those from The American University in Cairo, Egypt, found a "small, but statistically significant" rise in prevalence and death rates of breast, ovarian, uterine, and cervical cancers.

For an increase in temperature by a degree Celsius, prevalence of the cancers was found to rise by 173-280 cases per one lakh people -- cases of ovarian cancer rose the most, and those of breast cancer the least.

Death rates increased by 171-332 per one lakh people for each degree of temperature rise, with the biggest rise in ovarian cancer cases and the smallest in cervical cancer.

Findings, published in the journal Frontiers in Public Health, suggest that an increased ambient temperature is probably a risk factor for breast, ovarian, uterine, and cervical cancers.

"As temperatures rise, cancer mortality among women also rises -- particularly for ovarian and breast cancers," first author Wafa Abuelkheir Mataria of The American University in Cairo, said.

"Although the increases per degree of temperature rise are modest, their cumulative public health impact is substantial," Mataria said.

Studies have shown that conditions driven by climate change - rising temperatures, compromised food and water security, and poor air quality - increase the risk of disease and death worldwide.

In the context of cancer, people are potentially exposed more to risk factors like environmental toxins and are less likely to receive a prompt diagnosis and treatment -- and women are especially physiologically vulnerable, the researchers said.

The health risks are "compounded by inequalities that limit access to healthcare. Marginalised women face a multiplied risk because they are more exposed to environmental hazards and less able to access early screening and treatment services," co-author Sungsoo Chun, of The American University in Cairo, said.

The researchers added that the higher number of cancer cases observed in the study could also reflect improvements in cancer screening.

However, an improved screening would be expected to result in fewer deaths, as early-stage cancer is easier to treat, they said.

But both death rates and prevalence rose, suggesting that the driving factor is exposure to risk factors, the team said.

"Our analysis indicates a significant correlation between prolonged exposure to high ambient temperatures and all four cancer types studied. Notably, the prevalence of breast, ovarian, and cervical cancers is markedly influenced by temperature increases," the authors wrote. *—PTI*

Findings, published in the journal Frontiers in Public Health, suggest that an increased ambient temperature is probably a risk factor for breast, ovarian, uterine, and cervical cancers ***PHOTO: PTI***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

College students lead anti-drug campaign in Kerala villages

Students of Government Polytechnic College, Kalamassery, take a pledge as part of an anti-drug campaign ***PHOTO: X***

Revathy, a first-year BSc student from Malayinkeezhu Madhava Kavi Smaraka Government Arts and Science College (MMSC), walks down a narrow lane with a group of fellow students. All of them are NSS volunteers. Together, they knock on the door of a house in a quiet village.

An elderly man answers. Revathy greets him politely and explains that they are part of an anti-drug campaign. She then begins asking a series of questions as part of a household survey.

The man listens and responds patiently. The questions are meant to gather basic details about the family and to find out if anyone in the household may be using drugs.

These young volunteers are part of a special project launched in the Kattakada Assembly constituency in Thiruvananthapuram. The initiative was introduced by local MLA IB Satheesh and is focused on identifying, preventing, and helping people affected by drug abuse in six panchayats under the constituency.

What makes the programme stand out is its approach. The student volunteers stay in the homes of the villages for three days. During their stay, they observe the family's living conditions and try to notice if anyone shows unusual behaviour.

At the same time, they talk to the families about the dangers of drug use--especially the growing problem of synthetic drugs.

"The experience we got was excellent. We could try and understand what is going on in that house and also in the surroundings. We got valuable inputs regarding those who are using drugs in the area," Revathy told PTI.

She said along with the anti-drug campaign, it was also an effort to socially integrate the students with the local communities, understanding their needs and concerns.

MLA Satheesh said the outcome was much greater than they had expected. "We are carrying out this survey in all six panchayats so that we can understand the situation on the ground. I must admit that the cases of drug abuse in society are far more than we had imagined," Satheesh, who is the driving force behind this unique programme, told PTI.

He said that, arguably, this is the first time such an initiative has been launched in the country, and that the whole of Kerala could adopt it in its fight against drug abuse.

"They gained an experience that no university could have taught them. At the same time, they were able to educate parents--especially mothers--about the harmful effects of drug abuse and how to identify if something is going wrong with their children," Satheesh said.

He said both the parents and the youth in Kattakada have rallied behind the project.

"This is a great initiative, and the change has to start from the family. Through this programme, parents are becoming more aware and are able to recognise if their children display unusual behaviour, allowing them to intervene at an early stage," said Geetha, a teacher at the local government boys' high school.

The student volunteers, usually groups of 5 to 10 at a time, identify households and stay there for three days. In addition to conducting the survey, they also organise group discussions and interactive sessions to raise awareness about the dangers of drug abuse.

He said they are planning to cover every household with the survey, so that they can identify and prevent cases of drug abuse in Kattakada.

The students who have participated in the awareness campaign conducted by the volunteers also see it as a step in the right direction.

A total of 15,331 persons have been arrested in connection with these cases *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

2 killed, 9 injured in shooting at Philadelphia park

PHILADELPHIA, 27 MAY

Two individuals lost their lives and nine others were injured in a shooting at Fairmount Park in Philadelphia on Memorial Day, authorities reported. A male and female victim were confirmed dead, with the nine other casualties, including three teenagers aged 15 to 17, currently in stable condition. Witnesses heard gunfire around 10.27pm local time on 26 May as large crowds dispersed from the park. No suspects have been arrested, and officials have yet to recover any weapons, although Police Commissioner Kevin Bethel indicated that the firearm may have been modified with a device that allows a semi-automatic Glock to fire in rapid succession. Bethel noted the park's poor lighting conditions at the time of the crime. *—PTI*

3 killed in 'staged encounter' in Balochistan

BARKHAN/AWARAN, 27 MAY

In an alarming continuation of alleged extrajudicial killings in Balochistan, three men recently reported missing were killed in what many are labelling a staged encounter by the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in Barkhan. Abdul Rehman Buzdar, Fareed Buzdar, and Sultan Marri, whose bodies were retrieved from a local hospital, had been victims of enforced disappearance for several months. While a CTD spokesperson claimed the operation involved an exchange of fire with militants, family members and Baloch rights activists have dismissed this narrative, asserting the men were executed after illegal detention. In a separate incident, a young man named Ghaus Bakhsh was found dead in Awaran. *—ANI*

Australia's youngest senator elected at 21

MELBOURNE, 27 MAY

Charlotte Walker, who turned 21 on the day of Australia's federal election in May, has made history as the country's youngest senator. The former union official secured the Labour Party's third Senate seat for South Australia through the complex rank order voting system, despite having the lowest vote count among the six newly elected senators for the state. "I want to show young people, particularly young women, that this is achievable," Walker said, expressing excitement and acknowledging the pressures of her new role, which begins on 1 July. Before Walker, the title of youngest senator was held by Jordon Steele-John, who was elected at age 23 in 2017. *—PTI*

NZ teen dies after attempting viral collision game

WELLINGTON, 27 MAY

A 19-year-old New Zealander, Ryan Satterthwaite, has died after sustaining a fatal head injury while imitating a social media-driven collision game known as RUNIT or RUNIT Straight. The incident occurred in Palmerston North during an informal backyard game. Police described it as a "huge tragedy" and warned of the serious risks involved. "This is a social media frenzy with safety concerns," said Inspector Ross Grantham. The game, inspired by rugby and NFL, involves players colliding at full speed on a narrow "battlefield" without protective gear. It has surged in popularity through the Australian RUNIT Championship League. Experts have condemned the game for its brain injury risks. Organisers stressed it should only occur under professional supervision. *—PTI*

China to collect $22B debt from 75 nations

Many debtors are among world's poorest

BEIJING, 27 MAY

The repayments stem from a surge in lending under China's Belt and Road Initiative between 2012 and 2018 ***PHOTO: FREEPIK, AI IMAGE***

China will shift from being a global capital provider to a major debt collector in 2025, as 75 developing nations—many among the world's poorest—are set to repay a record USD 22 billion in loans, according to a report by the Australian think tank, the Lowy Institute.

The repayments stem from a surge in lending under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) between 2012 and 2018. With grace periods expiring, 2025 marks a critical period for repayments, noted researcher Riley Duke. "Debt repayments now far outstrip new disbursements," he said, adding that China's role as the chief debt collector may affect its global image as a development partner.

The report revealed that in 54 of 120 developing nations, payments to China now exceed combined repayments to the Paris Club of Western lenders. China remains the largest bilateral creditor for seven of its nine land neighbours, including Pakistan, Laos, and Mongolia. Since 2019, many of these countries have received fresh Chinese loans, even as Beijing scales down its BRI investment focus to "small but beautiful" projects amid its own economic slowdown.

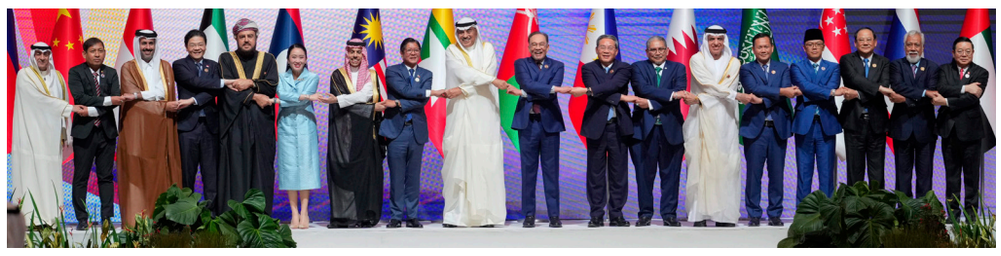
The Chinese Foreign Ministry dismissed the report, claiming "a handful of countries" were spreading false narratives. Spokesperson Mao Ning insisted China's lending follows international norms and debt sustainability principles, and highlighted the greater role of multilateral institutions in global debt burdens.

China's BRI investments have faced mounting criticism, especially after Sri Lanka leased its Hambantota port to China for 99 years as part of a debt swap. The COVID-19 pandemic further strained many recipient nations' ability to service debt, raising concerns of debt traps.

In Pakistan, China now holds the largest share of external debt—about USD 28.8 billion—surpassing both the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. Pakistan's external debt repayment needs for 2025 are projected between USD 22 and 30 billion.

In March, Beijing rolled over a USD 2 billion loan to Islamabad, continuing a pattern of short-term relief amid long-term repayment pressures.

The BRI, launched in 2013, was envisioned to link Asia with Europe and Africa through massive infrastructure investments. *—PTI*



Dignitaries pose for a group photo at the ASEAN–Gulf Cooperation Council–China Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on Tuesday ***PHOTO: PTI***

ASEAN opens talks with Gulf nations, China amid US tariffs

KUALA LUMPUR, 27 MAY

A regional gathering of leaders from Southeast Asia and the Gulf is set to convene on Tuesday in an effort to enhance economic resilience amid global volatility and US tariffs. Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim will host the summit in the capital city, bringing together the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

In his opening remarks, Ibrahim emphasised the significance of a robust ASEAN-GCC partnership, stating it is crucial for fostering interregional collaboration, building resilience, and securing sustainable prosperity. Chinese Premier Li Qiang is also expected to attend, reinforcing Beijing's ambition to position itself as a reliable ally in the region.

Kuwait's Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Khalid Al Sabah highlighted the importance of the relationship, noting that the GCC is ASEAN's seventh-largest trading partner, with total trade reaching approximately $130.7 billion in 2023. The GCC comprises oil-producing nations including Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

The summit comes in the wake of escalating trade tensions, particularly from the US, where previous tariffs had significantly impacted six ASEAN member nations.

In light of recent developments, including a 90-day pause on tariffs by the Trump administration, Anwar has expressed interest in coordinating an ASEAN summit with US officials to address these issues.

Analysts suggest ASEAN is increasingly tilting towards China while continuing to engage with US partnerships, a strategy that could have long-term implications for regional stability. *—PTI*

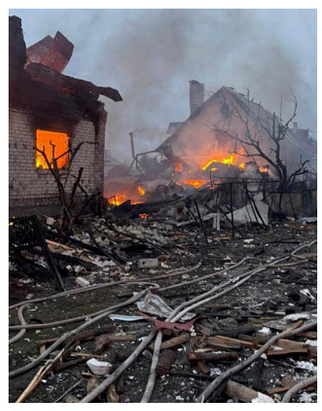
Russia takes four Ukrainian villages

KYIV, 27 MAY

Russian forces have taken four border villages in Ukraine's northeastern Sumy region, a local official said on Tuesday, days after Russian President Vladimir Putin said he had issued an order to establish a buffer zone along the border.

Meanwhile, a Russian bombing campaign that had escalated in recent days slowed overnight as far fewer Russian drones targeted Ukrainian towns and cities.

Moscow's invasion has shown no signs of stopping despite months of intense U.S.-led efforts to secure a ceasefire and get traction for peace talks. Since Russian and Ukrainian delegations met in Turkey earlier this month for their first direct talks in three years, a large prisoner exchange has been the only tangible outcome, but negotiations have brought no significant breakthrough.



Buildings on fire after a Russian drone attack in Kyiv ***PHOTO: PTI***

Between Friday and Sunday, Russia launched around 900 drones at Ukraine, officials said, amid a spate of large-scale bombardments. On Sunday night, Russia launched its biggest drone attack of the 3-year war against Ukraine, firing 355 drones. From Monday to Tuesday, Russia fired 60 drones at Ukraine, the Ukrainian air force said Tuesday. Russia's Ministry of Defence claimed its air defences had downed 99 Ukrainian drones overnight over seven Russian regions.

In Sumy, Russian forces are trying to advance deeper after capturing villages, Oleh Hryhorov, head of the Sumy regional military administration, said. Ukrainian forces are endeavouring to hold the line, he said. Residents of the captured villages were evacuated earlier, and there is no immediate threat to civilians, Hryhorov said. Putin visited the Kursk region last week for the first time since Moscow claimed that it drove Ukrainian forces out of the area last month. *—PTI*

King Charles to outline Carney's priorities

OTTAWA, 27 MAY

- Trump's repeated suggestion that the US annex Canada prompted Carney to invite Charles to give the speech from the throne. The king is the head of state in Canada

King Charles III will outline new Prime Minister Mark Carney's government priorities in a speech in the Canadian Parliament on Tuesday. It's widely viewed as a show of support in the face of annexation threats by US President Donald Trump.

Trump's repeated suggestion that the US annex Canada prompted Prime Minister Carney to invite Charles to give the speech from the throne. The king is the head of state in Canada, which is a member of the British Commonwealth of former colonies.

Carney said in a statement the visit speaks to the "vitality of our constitutional monarchy and our distinct identity."

It is rare for the monarch to deliver what's called the speech from the throne in Canada. Charles' mother, Queen Elizabeth II, did it twice in her 70-year reign, the last time in 1977.

The speech is not written by the king or his UK advisers as Charles serves as a nonpartisan head of state. He will read what is put before him by Canada's government.

Carney , the new prime minister and a former head of the Bank of England, and Canada's first Indigenous governor general, Mary Simon, the king's representative in Canada, met with the king on Monday.

Canadians are largely indifferent to the monarchy, but Carney has been eager to show the differences between Canada and the United States. The king's visit clearly underscores Canada's sovereignty, he said.

Carney won the job of prime minister by promising to confront the increased aggression shown by Trump. *—PTI*

King Charles, Queen Camilla, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and his wife Diana Fox Carney pose for a portrait at Rideau Hall in Ottawa, Ontario, during a royal visit ***PHOTO: PTI***

4 Liverpool fans critical as car mows crowd

LIVERPOOL, 27 MAY

British police were holding a 53-year-old man on Tuesday over a collision that turned a joyous soccer celebration in Liverpool to tragedy and sent more than two dozen people to hospitals, four of them in very serious condition.

Merseyside Police said they are not treating the incident as terrorism and are not looking for other suspects.

Detectives were working to piece together how a minivan ploughed into crowds packing a narrow street, just after the players of Liverpool Football Club celebrated the Premier League championship.

Water Street, near the River Mersey in the heart of the city, was cordoned off by police tape, and a blue tent had been erected on the road strewn with the detritus of celebration, including bottles, cans and Liverpool flags. Liverpool Mayor Steve Rotheram said four of the injured were "very, very ill in hospital".

Police and emergency personnel deal with an incident after a car collided with pedestrians during the Premier League winner parade in Liverpool on Tuesday ***PHOTO: PTI***

The North West Ambulance Service said a total of 47 people were injured, of whom 27 were taken to local hospitals, while 20 were treated at the scene of the crash for minor injuries. There were no reported deaths.

Four of the injured are children, said ambulance service spokesman Dave Kitchin.

Four of the victims, including a child, were trapped under the van and firefighters had to lift the vehicle to free them.

Hundreds of thousands of Liverpudlians had crammed the streets of the port city in northwest England on Monday to celebrate the team winning England's Premier League this season for a record-tying 20th top-flight title. *—PTI*

Saudi denies plans to lift alcohol ban

RIYADH, 27 MAY

Saudi Arabia has denied media reports suggesting the Kingdom plans to lift its 73-year-old ban on the sale and consumption of alcohol by 2026.

A Saudi official on 26 May, dismissed the claims, reaffirming that the country – the birthplace of Islam – continues to prohibit alcohol for Muslims. It follows a widely circulated report published on a wine blog last week, which alleged that Saudi authorities were preparing to introduce a licensing system allowing limited alcohol sales in designated tourist zones such as NEOM, Sindalah Island and the Red Sea Project. The blog, however, cited no official sources.

Speculation had suggested that the new framework might permit alcohol sales at around 600 venues, including luxury resorts, five-star hotels, and diplomatic zones, as part of broader reforms tied to the upcoming Riyadh Expo 2030 and FIFA World Cup 2034. Saudi Arabia has enforced a ban on alcohol since 1952, applying to both citizens and foreign nationals. However, since January 2024, one store in Riyadh has been authorised to sell alcohol to non-Muslim diplomats under strict controls. Officials said while economic diversification under Vision 2030 continues, cultural and religious values remain paramount. *—Agencies*

Sherpa guide Rita sets Everest record with 31st ascent

KATHMANDU, 27 MAY

Renowned Nepalese Sherpa guide Kami Rita has reached the summit of Mount Everest for an unprecedented 31st time, breaking his own record for the most successful ascents of the world's highest peak.

The 55-year-old climber reached the 8,849-metre summit at approximately 4am amidst stable weather conditions, according to Mingma Sherpa, chairman of Seven Summit Treks, the expedition organiser. Kami Rita was leading a team from the Indian Army Adventure Wing, under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Manoj Joshi.

"This remarkable feat solidifies his status as the foremost record holder for the highest number of ascents—a record unmatched by anyone else," Mingma reported. "Kami is safe and has begun his descent." With over two decades of climbing experience, Kami Rita began his mountaineering journey in 1992 and has demonstrated exceptional skill and professionalism throughout his career. In addition to Everest, he has also summited K2, Lhotse, Manaslu, and Cho Oyu on multiple occasions. *—PTI*

HIGH PUBLIC DEMAND

France votes on bill legalising euthanasia

PARIS, 27 MAY

France's lower house of parliament, the National Assembly, is voting on Tuesday on a bill to allow adults with incurable illness to take lethal medication, as public demands grow across Europe for legal end-of-life options.

Tuesday's vote, expected in the late afternoon, is a key legislative step on the contentious and long-debated issue. If passed by lawmakers, the bill will be sent to the Senate for further debate.

The proposed measure defines assisted dying as allowing people to use a lethal substance under certain conditions so that they may take it themselves. Only those whose physical condition doesn't allow them to do it alone would be able to get help from a doctor or a nurse.

To benefit from the newly proposed measure, patients would need to be over 18 and be French citizens or live in France. A team of medical professionals would need to confirm that the patient has a grave and incurable illness "at an advanced or terminal stage," is suffering from intolerable and untreatable pain, and is seeking lethal medication of their own free will.

Patients with severe psychiatric conditions and neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease won't be eligible.

The person would initiate the request for lethal medication and confirm the request after a period of reflection.

If approved, a doctor would then deliver a prescription for the lethal medication, which could be taken at home, at a nursing home or a health care facility. *—PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Gold declines by ₹800 to ₹98,500/10g

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Gold prices declined Rs 800 to Rs 98,500 per 10g, bringing an end to its four-day rally, in the national capital on Tuesday amid a fall in gold rates globally, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity depreciated Rs 800 to Rs 98,000 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes). It had closed at Rs 98,800 per 10g in the previous market session. Additionally, silver prices plunged Rs 1,370 to Rs 99,000 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) on Tuesday. The white metal had settled at Rs 1,00,370 per kg on Monday. On the global front, spot gold slipped by USD 45.03 per ounce or 1.35 per cent to USD 3,296.92 per ounce. —*PTI*

Rupee slides by 27P to settle at 85.37 against USD

MUMBAI, 27 MAY

The rupee depreciated 27 paise to 85.37 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, tracking a recovery in American currency index, negative domestic equity market and muted foreign fund inflow. According to forex analysts, investors also moved cautiously awaiting domestic industrial and manufacturing production data for April as well as the first quarter GDP growth numbers to be released this week. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 85.15 and moved between the high of 85.11 and the low of 85.45 against the greenback during intraday trade. The unit settled at 85.37 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a loss of 27 paise over its previous close. The rupee closed 35 paise higher at 85.10 against the greenback on Monday. —*PTI*

India's retail sector grew 4% in April, says survey

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Retail sales in India rose by 4per cent in April 2025 compared to the same month last year, according to a survey by the Retailers Association of India (RAI), indicating steady domestic demand despite global trade uncertainty. North and West India saw the highest year-on-year growth at 6 per cent and 5 per cent respectively, while East and South recorded 2 per cent each. Quick service restaurants led category growth with 11 per cent, followed by beauty, wellness, and food and grocery at 6 per cent each. Sports goods and consumer electronics grew by just 1 per cent. Despite falling footfall, purposeful purchasing and interest in new, aspirational products supported sales. —*PTI*

RBI nod to online transactions across border for trade

MUMBAI, 27 MAY

Worldline ePayments India Private Limited has received authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as an Export-Import Payment Aggregator – Cross-Border. Announced on 21 May 2025, this licence enables the company to facilitate cross-border online transactions for the import and export of goods and services. Ramesh Narasimhan, CEO of Worldline India, said the approval reinforces the company's long-standing commitment to the Indian market and its focus on regulatory compliance. In addition to the new authorisation, Worldline ePayments India is already approved to operate as a domestic Payment Aggregator and a Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit. With over 26 years in India, Worldline supports digital payments across sectors, partnering with over 30 major banks and institutions. —*ANI*

Sensex snaps 2-day rally, drops by 624.82 points

Nifty falls by 174.95 pts; banking, IT, auto shares retreat

MUMBAI, 27 MAY

Snapping the two-day gaining streak, benchmark Sensex tumbled nearly 625 points on Tuesday due to profit-taking in banking, IT and auto shares.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 624.82 points or 0.76 per cent to settle at 81,551.63 in a volatile session. During the day, the barometer tanked 1,054.75 points or 1.28 per cent to 81,121.70. As many as 25 Sensex shares declined while five advanced.

The 50-issue NSE Nifty declined 174.95 points or 0.70 per cent to 24,826.20. The barometer saw sharp swings in both directions in the first half but sustained profit-taking in heavyweight stocks dragged the index down.

Key indices Sensex and Nifty had advanced around 1.5 per cent in the past two sessions.

Analysts said investors turned cautious ahead of the release of industrial and manufacturing production data for April on Wednesday and the first quarter GDP numbers, scheduled to be announced later this week.

As many as 25 Sensex shares declined while five advanced PHOTO: PTI

From the Sensex firms, UltraTech Cement fell the most by 2.21 per cent, followed by ITC which declined 2.01 per cent. Tata Motors, NTPC, Axis Bank, HCL Tech, Mahindra & Mahindra, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Eternal were among the laggards.

IndusInd Bank, Sun Pharma, Adani Ports, Nestle and Asian Paints were the gainers.

Mid- and small-cap segments remained relatively resilient, supported by better-than-estimated Q4 earnings and moderation in premium valuation, Nair added.

- Analysts said investors turned cautious ahead of the release of industrial and manufacturing production data for April on Wednesday and the first quarter GDP numbers, scheduled to be announced later this week

The BSE smallcap gauge went up by 0.19 per cent and midcap index climbed 0.18 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, FMCG dropped 0.79 per cent, IT declined 0.71 per cent, BSE Focused IT by 0.68 per cent, auto by 0.66 per cent, bankex by 0.60 per cent, utilities by 0.57 per cent and metal by 0.52 per cent.

Healthcare, industrials, telecommunication, capital goods, realty and consumer durables were the gainers.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.51 per cent to USD 65.07 a barrel. – *PTI*

SECOND SALE IN A YEAR

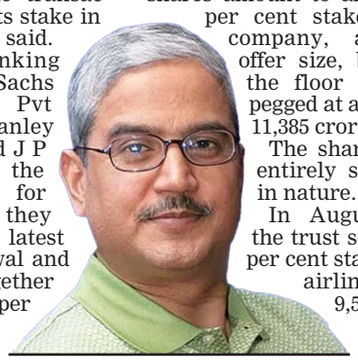
Rakesh Gangwal, family trust sell 5.7% IndiGo stake

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

InterGlobe Aviation promoter Rakesh Gangwal and his family trust on Tuesday sold a 5.7 per cent stake in the airline for about Rs 11,385 crore through a block deal, according to sources.

Apart from Gangwal, the Chinkerpoo Family Trust, whose trustees are Shobha Gangwal and JP Morgan Trust Company of Delaware, also participated in the transaction for divesting its stake in IndiGo, the sources said.

Investment banking firms Goldman Sachs (India) Securities Pvt Ltd, Morgan Stanley India Company and J P Morgan India are the placement agents for the stake sale, they added. Before the latest transaction, Gangwal and the family trust together owned about 13.5 per cent in IndiGo.



As per the latest block deal, up to 2.2 crore equity shares were sold at a floor price of Rs 5,175 per share, as per the updated term sheet. The total number of shares has been raised from the initial 1.32 crore shares worth around Rs 6,831 crore mentioned in the earlier term sheet. The floor price is at a 4.5 per cent discount compared to the closing price of Rs 5,420 per share on Monday.

The sources said 2.2 crore shares amount to around 5.7 per cent stake in the company, and the offer size, based on the floor price, is pegged at around Rs 11,385 crore.

The share sale is entirely secondary in nature.

In August 2024, the trust sold a 5.24 per cent stake in the airline for Rs 9,549 crore. — *PTI*

Muted response for Blue Water Logistics IPO on opening day

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Blue Water Logistics launched its initial public offering (IPO) for subscription today, 27 May 2025, but has garnered a lukewarm response from investors.

As of 1:30 PM on the first day, the IPO was only 16 per cent subscribed, according to the National Stock Exchange (NSE). Retail investors contributed a subscription rate of 31 per cent, while the non-institutional investors' (NIIs) segment saw a mere 5 per cent uptake.

Notably, no bids were received from qualified institutional buyers (QIBs), who have at least 50 per cent of the issue reserved for them.

In the grey market, unlisted shares of Blue Water Logistics were trading flat at Rs 135, the upper end of the price band.

The IPO, which is open for three days and will close on 29 May, aims to raise Rs 40.5 crore through a fresh issue of 3 million equity shares. The company intends to allocate Rs 10.5 crore for purchasing vehicles and Rs 20 crore for working capital needs.

Blue Water Logistics, based in Hyderabad, provides logistics and supply chain solutions across various industries.

Shares are expected to list on 3 June 2025. — *Agencies*

OYO begins discussions with banks

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Global travel tech platform OYO has started discussions with bankers for a fresh attempt at IPO, targeting a listing in the last quarter of the current financial year, sources said. Preliminary discussions with investment banks have indicated a potential valuation range of USD 6-7 billion for the public offering. The company started informal discussions last month and is now calling for pitches, according to a person familiar with the development.

A crucial round of discussions with the company's board and with its key shareholder, SoftBank's representatives, is scheduled for June in London. —*PTI*

Fusion CX files IPO papers with Sebi

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Fusion CX Ltd, a customer experience service provider based in Kolkata, has filed documents with SEBI seeking approval to raise Rs 1,000 crore through an IPO.

The offer includes a fresh issue of equity shares worth Rs 600 crore and an Offer for Sale (OFS) of shares valued at Rs 400 crore by promoters PNS Business Private Ltd and Rasish Consultants Private Ltd. The company may also raise up to Rs 120 crore in a pre-IPO placement, which would reduce the fresh issue size. Fusion CX operates 40 delivery centres across 15 countries and reported FY24 revenues of Rs 991 crore with a net profit of Rs 36 crore. — *PTI*

Jio Financial gets Sebi nod for mutual fund operation

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Jio Financial Services Ltd (JFSL) on Tuesday said its subsidiary has received capital market regulator Sebi's approval for mutual fund operation.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), vide letter dated May 26, 2025, has granted certificate of registration to "Jio BlackRock Mutual Fund" and approval to Jio BlackRock Asset Management Private Limited to act as the Asset Management Company for Jio BlackRock Mutual Fund, JFSL said in a regulatory filing.

The company, on 29 October, 2024, intimating incorporation of two companies, "Jio BlackRock Asset Management Private Limited" and "Jio BlackRock Trustee Private Limited", to carry on the primary business of mutual fund, subject to regulatory approvals, it said.

In January, JFSL had said that the company and its joint venture partner, US-based BlackRock, have infused Rs 117 crore in the mutual fund company.

- JFSL and BlackRock each have further subscribed to and have been allotted 5.85 crore equity shares of Rs 10 each of Jio BlackRock Asset Management Private Limited (a 50:50 Joint Venture between the company and BlackRock)

JFSL and BlackRock each have further subscribed to and have been allotted 5.85 crore equity shares of Rs 10 each of Jio BlackRock Asset Management Private Limited (a 50:50 Joint Venture between the company and BlackRock), aggregating Rs 117 crore.

JFSL and BlackRock have made an initial investment of Rs 82.5 crore each in this entity. — *PTI*

Instamart drops parent Swiggy from name

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Quick commerce platform Instamart has dropped parent Swiggy from its name, in a move aimed at carving a standalone brand identity.

The move comes days after rival Zomato, which also owns Blinkit, rebranded as Eternal on the stock exchanges, with quick commerce becoming a significant driver for the firms beyond their food delivery businesses. At multiple instances, Swiggy Group CEO Sriharsha Majety has spoken about how the company expects Instamart to surpass food delivery in terms of both penetration and scale.

"Integrated within the main Swiggy app, Instamart also launched a standalone app earlier this year. As Instamart enters this next phase, its refreshed identity reflects the brand's identity while remaining true to the Swiggy values that make it so loved," Swiggy said in a statement.

"Instamart has unveiled a fresh logo, which contains the Swiggy 'S-Pin' icon as "a subtle tribute to the brand's origins", the company informed.

The new identity will roll out across the app, packaging, delivery bags, communication, and campaigns over the coming weeks. — *PTI*

Niti suggests revenue-based financing for medium firms

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The policy think-tank NITI Aayog, through a report by the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI), has emphasised the need to support medium enterprises with better working capital options. It suggests introducing revenue-based financing, emergency credit lines, and a credit card with a pre-approved limit of up to Rs 5 crore.

While the government's Self-Reliant India Fund addresses some gaps, no dedicated scheme exists specifically for medium enterprises' liquidity needs. The report also highlights the importance of adopting Industry 4.0 technologies and integrating these businesses into global supply chains. It praises the government's initiative to establish 20 new Technology Centres and 100 Extension Centres, urging tailored skill development and enhanced R&D support. Lastly, it recommends creating a central digital portal to improve awareness of government schemes and facilitate access for medium enterprises. — *ANI*

PHOTO: ANI

- While the government's Self-Reliant India Fund addresses some gaps, no dedicated scheme exists specifically for medium enterprises' liquidity needs.

INDIA'S EXPORTS MAY REACH $1T IN FY26: FIEO

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

The country's overall goods and services exports are expected to reach USD 1 trillion during 2025-26, according to apex exporters' body FIEO.

In 2024-25, the exports were aggregated at USD 825 billion.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President SC Ralhan said merchandise exports will increase from USD 437 billion to USD 525-535 billion in 2025-26.

He said that services exports may rise from USD 387 billion to USD 465-475 billion this fiscal.

The main sectors which can help push the exports include electrical and electronics (USD 60 billion), machinery (USD 40 billion) and chemicals (USD 40 billion). —*PTI*

Banking sector likely to get foreign investors

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Fitch Ratings on Tuesday said Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group's (SMFG) 20 per cent stake buy in Yes Bank could pave way for other foreign entrants in the Indian banking sector.

India's foreign investment norms cap voting rights for investors in banks at 26 per cent and investments by financial institutions in Indian banks at 15 per cent, which have deterred such stake sales, its said.

"The Yes Bank transaction will be the first significant acquisition by a foreign bank and would give SMFG significant control over Yes BANK as the largest shareholder with two board appointees. It could pave the way for future transactions, if the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) approval for the transaction sets a precedent," Fitch said in a statement.

PHOTO: ANI

"We anticipate opportunities for investments in India's mid-sized banks by foreign banks looking to expand their presence in India, although we believe the RBI's preference is for foreign banks with strong performance and governance to acquire stakes larger than 26 per cent through wholly-owned Indian subsidiaries regulated in India," Fitch said. — *PTI*

TECH TALENT SURVEY

IT workforce in B'luru crosses 1M mark

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Bengaluru is among the top 12 global technology hubs with a tech workforce in the IT city crossing the 1 million mark, according to real estate consultant CBRE.

The CBRE has released a report, "Global Tech Talent Guidebook 2025", which highlights global tech talent dynamics across 115 markets.

The report evaluates these markets based on the availability, quality and cost of tech talent and classifies them into three categories: Powerhouse of 12 markets with large, deep, and highly competitive talent pools, Established around 63 mature markets with consistent talent pipelines, and Emerging 40 growth-focused markets with improving capabilities.

- The CBRE report underscored Bengaluru's leadership in AI development talent, stating that it has the most AI-related professionals in India, placing it on par with established US clusters like San Francisco and New York

Beijing, Boston, London, New York Metro, Paris, San Francisco Bay Area, Seattle, Shanghai, Singapore, Tokyo and Toronto are the other tech powerhouses.

CBRE said that the report underscored Bengaluru's leadership in AI development talent, stating that it has the most AI-related professionals in India, placing it on par with established US clusters like San Francisco and New York.

In terms of demographics, Bengaluru ranked 4th among the 12 tech powerhouse markets in share of working-age population, with 75.5 per cent of its population falling in the working-age bracket.

Moreover, the city recorded a 2.4 per cent growth in working-age population between 2019 and 2024, making it one of the fastest-growing globally in this segment.

Bengaluru's startup ecosystem, supported by 28 unicorns, benefits from favourable business regulations and strong institutional support. — *PTI*

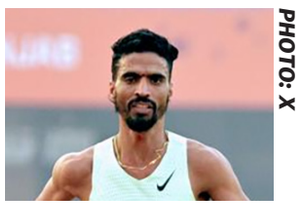


PHOTO: X

Gulveer Singh wins first gold at Asian Athletics C'ships

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Gulveer Singh won India's first gold medal at the 2025 Asian Athletics Championships, topping the men's 10,000m event. This marks India's third gold in the men's 10,000m at the Asian Championships, following Hari Chand (1975) and G. Lakshmanan (2017). Gulveer, the national record holder (27:00.22), started steadily and remained in the five-man lead pack for most of the race. He surged ahead in the final lap, cruising past Bahrain's Albert Kibichi Rop, and finished with a comfortable lead, clocking 28:38.63. This is Gulveer's second Asian Championships medal, adding to his 5000m bronze from 2023.—*PTI*

Pakistan, B'desh look to future with T20 WC on horizon

KARACHI, 27 MAY

Next year's T20 World Cup is in sight as a new-look Pakistan under Mike Hesson hosts a young Bangladesh team in Lahore in three T20Is from Wednesday.The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has decided against using DRS technology during the three-match T20 home series against Bangladesh due to cost issues.It has won only three of its last 13 T20Is, two against minnows Zimbabwe, and slumped to eighth in the T20I rankings. With a new head coach in New Zealand's Hesson Pakistan is looking to younger players with the World Cup in India and Sri Lanka just eight months away.Star batsmen Babar Azam and Rizwan, and pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi, have all been axed. Salman Agha will lead the side, having lost a series in New Zealand 4-1 two months ago.—*PTI*

Cameron Norrie beats Medvedev in epic 5-setter

Sinner beats Arthur for a 15th straight Grand Slam win

PARIS, 27 MAY

Great Britain's Cameron Norrie got his best win in over a year as he prevailed in a five-set epic against Daniil Medvedev in their French Open first-round clash on Tuesday.

Norrie was competing in his eighth consecutive French Open and came through 7-5, 6-3, 4-6, 1-6, 7-5 against the 2021 US Open champion in 3 hours 53 minutes, for what was his biggest win since he defeated Casper Ruud at the 2024 Australian Open. That makes it four Brits through to the second round after Emma Raducanu, Katie Boulter, and Jacob Fearnley won on Monday.

The fifth set started with a lengthy game as Norrie saved four break points to save serve but Medvedev broke him in the third game to take control. Norrie then broke back in the 10th game to make it 5-5 and broke Medvedev again in the 12th, to take the fifth set 7-5.

Cameron Norrie saw a two-set lead fall away before recovering in the final set to win

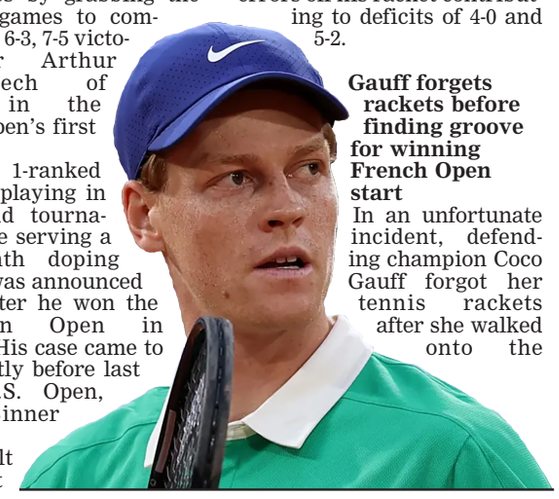
PHOTO: X / @CAM_NORRIE

Jannik Sinner stretched his Grand Slam winning streak to 15 matches by grabbing the last five games to complete a 6-4, 6-3, 7-5 victory over Arthur Rinderknech of France in the French Open's first round.

The No. 1-ranked Sinner is playing in his second tournament since serving a three-month doping ban that was announced shortly after he won the Australian Open in January. His case came to light shortly before last year's U.S. Open, which Sinner also won.

The result against the 75th-ranked Rinderknech in Court Philippe-Chatrier was Sinner's 62nd win in a row against opponents outside the top 20.

Sinner was pretty close to perfect over the initial two sets Monday, combining for 19 winners and just eight unforced errors in that span. His level dipped a bit in the third, with nine unforced errors off his racket contributing to deficits of 4-0 and 5-2.



Gauff forgets rackets before finding groove for winning French Open start

In an unfortunate incident, defending champion Coco Gauff forgot her tennis rackets after she walked onto the Philippe-Chatrier Court for her opening round match at the French Open 2025 on Tuesday, the video of which went viral on social media.Despite the rackets issue, Gauff made little effort in thumping Australian Gadecki 6-2, 6-2 in straight sets. The American made up for the delayed start by easing through the first three games and wrapped up the opening set with a battling hold after dropping her service earlier. There was no looking back from there as Gauff tightened her grip on the contest despite the challenging conditions.

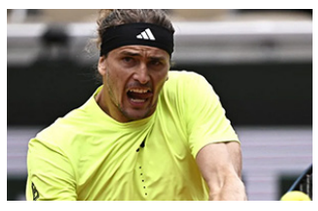
Alexander Zverev reaches second round

Third seed Alexander Zverev reached the 2025 French Open second round after beating the USA's Learner Tien.

The German veteran claimed a 6-3, 6-3, 6-4 victory in the men's singles first round.

Notably, Zverev was the 2024 French Open runner-up as he lost to Carlos Alcaraz in the final.

The former is now vying for his maiden Grand Slam title, having lost three finals.



Ons Jabeur crashes out of Roland Garros

The 2025 French Open delivered one of its first major upsets on Tuesday as Tunisia's Ons Jabeur suffered a stinging straight-sets defeat to Poland's Magdalena Frech on Court Simonne-Mathieu, falling 7-6(4), 6-0 in the opening round.

Jabeur, the former world No. 2 and one of the most beloved figures in Arab tennis, was unable to find her rhythm and succumbed to an increasingly one-sided contest that raised serious questions about her form and fitness.

What followed was a complete unraveling. In the second set, Jabeur failed to win a single game, falling victim to unforced errors. —*PTI*

Loss to PBKS a bit of a wake-up call for MI: Rickelton

JAIPUR, 27 MAY

Mumbai Indians opener Ryan Rickelton admitted that the seven-wicket defeat to Punjab Kings was a "wake-up call." Still, it was confident that the five-time champions have what it takes to win the IPL Eliminator.

Mumbai failed to seal a top-two finish, faltering in their final league game against PBKS on Monday. The defeat now sets them up for the Eliminator on Thursday, where they will face either Gujarat Titans or Sunrisers Hyderabad.

"They outplayed us... so it was a bit of a wake-up call," Rickelton said at the post-match press conference.

Invited to bat first, MI posted an underwhelming 184/7, which the Kings chased down with nine balls to spare. The wicket-keeper batter acknowledged that Mumbai has areas to fine-tune ahead of the knockouts.

"It's not the end of the world. In all honesty, the team is clicking very nicely. We just need to sharpen up one or two things with the bat, ball, and in the field as well.

"We've got the skills and group to win the Eliminator. The guys will focus on the areas we need to improve, and I'm sure we'll put up a strong performance," he said. Reflecting on the performance against PBKS, the South African felt MI were 20 runs short of a good total.

Surreal feeling, but job isn't done yet: Shashank Singh

JAIPUR, 27 MAY

Punjab Kings batter Shashank Singh revealed that the team collectively "manifested" a top-two finish after the mini-auction, but emphasised that the job is only half done, with the ultimate goal of winning the IPL trophy this season.

PBKS became the first team to secure a top-two spot and sealed their place in Qualifier 1 with a stunning seven-wicket win over Mumbai Indians on Monday. Often labelled perennial underachievers, this marks the franchise's first playoff appearance in 11 years. "It feels surreal," Shashank said at the post-match press conference.

"The best thing is we manifested this as a team, not just individually, but as a unit. Right after the auction, we created a WhatsApp group and talked about winning the title this year .—*PTI*

Mary Earps calls it a career ahead of Women's Euros

LIVERPOOL, 27 MAY

England women's goalkeeper Mary Earps announced she is retiring from international football with immediate effect on Tuesday in a stunning move, barely a month before the start of the European Championship.

Earps called time on an eight-year career that included 53 appearances for England and numerous individual accolades, including two FIFA Best Awards and a World Cup Golden Glove, as well as winning the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year in 2023.

The Paris St-Germain keeper was a key player at both England's 2022 European Championship victory and their runners-up finish to Spain at the 2023 Women's World Cup. She had recently been named to Sarina Wiegman's squad for Nations League games on Friday against Portugal and on Tuesday against Spain. "I've spent a long time making this decision, and it's not one I've made lightly," Earps said in a statement. "Ultimately, this is the right time for me to step aside and allow the younger generation to thrive. Winning the Euros in 2022 was the best day of my life, and I'm rooting for the girls to do it again this summer." —*PTI*

UTT Juniors set to kick off on 29 May

AHMEDABAD, 27 MAY

The inaugural Dream UTT junior table tennis tournament, featuring eight boys and eight girls of the franchise teams, is scheduled to be staged at the EKA Arena, Ahmedabad, on a league cum knock-out basis from 29 May to 8 June.

The top eight boys and girls were selected from Dream Sports Championship staged in March, in which Sahil Rawat emerged champions. —*PTI*

SINGAPORE OPEN

Sindhu, Prannoy advance to 2nd round

SINGAPORE, 27 MAY

Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and HS Prannoy moved to the second round of the Singapore Open Super 750 tournament with contrasting victories here on Tuesday.

Sindhu made light work of Canada's Wen Yu Zhang to notch a 21-14, 21-9 win in just 31 minutes. A far tougher challenge awaits the former world champion in the next round, where she will face Tokyo Olympic gold medallist and current world No.5 Chen Yu Fei of China. World No. 34 Prannoy, meanwhile, had to dig deep for his win. The 32-year-old battled past Denmark's higher-ranked Rasmus Gemke, fighting back from a game down to triumph 19-21, 21-16, 21-14. He will lock horns with France's Christov Popov in the round of 16. However, it was a disappointing day for the rest of the Indian contingent with Malvika Bansod, Anmol Kharb, Priyanshu Rajawat, and all crashing out after suffering defeats in their respective opening round singles matches. Malvika and Priyanshu both let slip a one-game lead. Malvika lost 21-14, 18-21, 11-21 to Thailand's eighth seed Supanida Katethong, while Priyanshu fell 21-14, 10-21, 14-21 to seventh-seeded Japanese shuttler Kodai Naraoka in a match that lasted over an hour. Anmol was outclassed by Chen. The Indian showed grit in the second game before going down 11-21, 22-24. —*PTI*

National Trials: Sheoran finishes on top in Shotgun

NEW DELHI, 27 MAY

Lakshay Sheoran and Neeru Dhanda finished on top in the men's and women's categories, respectively, in the trap finals of the second shotgun national trials here Tuesday.

Lakshay, who cut with a score of 120 in qualification, shot 43 in the finals, a two-shot difference over Jaswinder Singh, who finished second with a score of 41.In the women's finals, Nationals Games gold medallist Neeru edged Aashima Ahlawat 40-39 to secure the top spot.

Olympian Rajeshwari Kumari secured third place with a score of 31, while Bhowneesh Mendiratta finished third in the men's category with a score of 33.

Earlier, in the qualification round, Jungsher S. Virk shot 119 to qualify for the finals behind Lakshay. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Ancelotti prefers Vinicius Júnior over Neymar

RIO DE JANEIRO, 27 MAY

Carlo Ancelotti's first day as Brazil coach included saying "No" to Neymar and a promise to find more improvement from his former Real Madrid striker Vinícius Júnior. Ancelotti was introduced on Monday at a packed press conference in a Rio de Janeiro hotel, and just to ensure he was under no illusions as to his primary task, he was welcomed by Brazil's last two World Cup-winning coaches, 1994's Carlos Alberto Parreira and 2002's Luiz Felipe Scolari.—*PTI*

Dramatic late goal saves Heidenheim's Bundesliga status

MUNICH, 27 MAY

Heidenheim will play in the Bundesliga again next year after overcoming Elversberg 2-1 with a dramatic stoppage time goal in the German league's most lucrative playoff. The teams drew 2-2 in Heidenheim last Thursday, and Heidenheim secured its place in the top tier with a 4-3 aggregate triumph after Leo Scienza completed a superbly worked goal in the fifth minute of injury time. The play-off, known in Germany as the Relegation, is between the teams that finish third-to-last in the Bundesliga and second in Bundesliga 2.Heidenheim's victory meant the top-tier club has won all six playoffs.—*PTI*

NORWAY CHESS

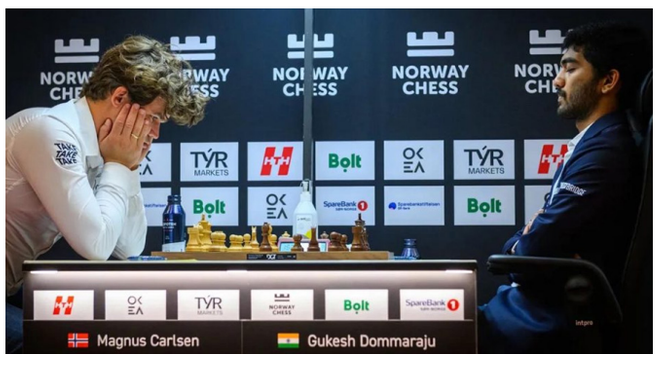
Carlsen overcomes Gukesh's challenge in thriller

STAVANGER, 27 MAY

World No.1 Magnus Carlsen inflicted a huge blow to reigning World Champion D Gukesh's chances in the opening round of Norway Chess here, showing his endgame expertise to log three full points.

In what had been touted as the match of the tournament, with the five-time world champion playing against an opponent half his age, Gukesh kept the Norwegian defending champion under pressure for most of the over four-hour-long game of classical chess before the Indian made a losing mistake and lost in 55 moves.

Following the win, Carlsen earned three points and is in a joint lead with American Grandmaster and world No.2 Hikaru Nakamura, who beat American GM Fabiano Caruana.



World No.1 Magnus Carlsen inflicted a huge blow to reigning World Champion D Gukesh

PHOTO: X

The second Indian in the fray, Arjun Erigaisi, defeated China's No.1 Wei Yi in an exciting Armageddon game after the classical game had ended in a draw.

Erigaisi earned 1.5 points from the win, while Wei secured one. The tournament's scoring system gives three points to the winner in the Classical format.

If the Classical game is drawn, the players gain one point each and then play for another half-point in Armageddon. Two-time World Rapid champion Koneru Humpy score a decisive win against R. Vaishali in an all-Indian match-up.

Playing with characteristic calm and precision, Humpy capitalised on her opponent's mistake in the endgame.—*PTI*

Cristiano Ronaldo confirms Al-Nassr chapter 'over'

DUBAI, 27 MAY

Portugal icon Cristiano Ronaldo indicated on Monday that he could leave Al-Nassr after declaring that a "chapter is over" hours after the Saudi Pro League finished. Ronaldo, 40, joined Al-Nassr in 2022 from Manchester United, and his contract in Saudi Arabia ends this summer. A special transfer window runs from June 1-10 to allow the 32 clubs involved in the Club World Cup to sign players. The iconic goalscorer is said to be in talks with a few clubs over a switch ahead of the start of the Club World Cup.

"This chapter is over," Ronaldo cryptically said on social media with a photo of him in an Al-Nassr shirt.

"The story? Still being written. Grateful to all," the former Real Madrid and Juventus attacker added. Al-Nassr missed out on the Asian Champions League Elite, losing to Japan's Kawasaki Frontale in April's semi-finals, and were third in the Saudi Pro League. Ronaldo ended as the league's top goal scorer with 24. —*PTI*